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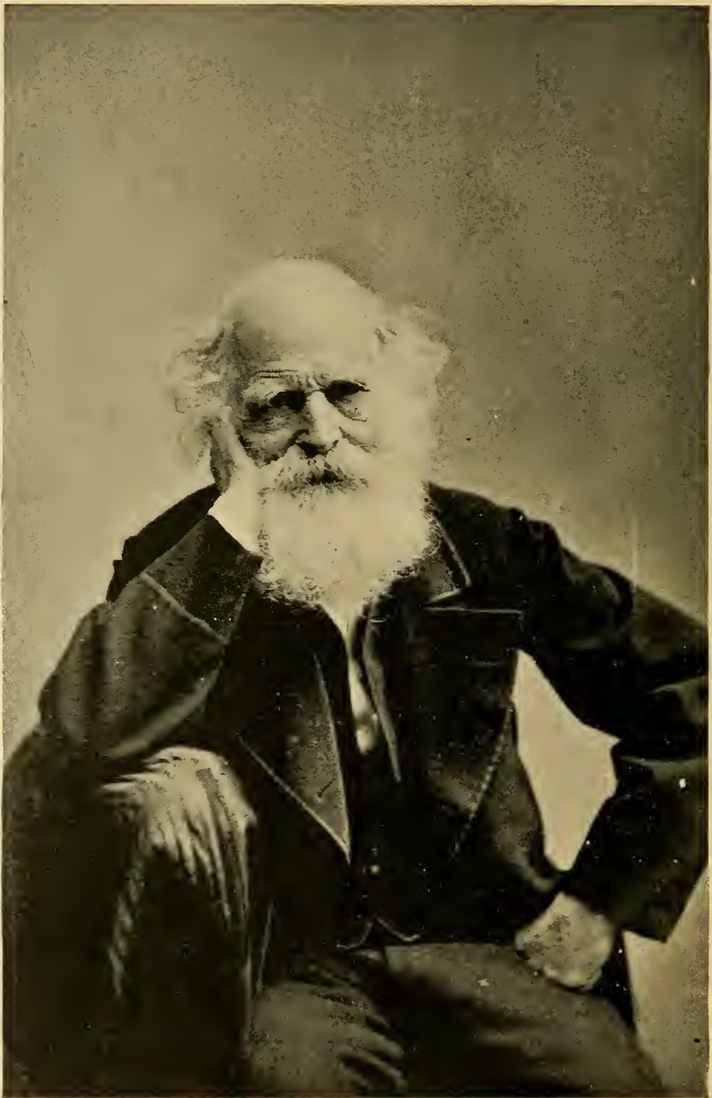


*Yours at the Old Homestead,*
*William Cullen Bryant.*

Cummington, Mass.

# BRYANT CENTENNIAL

# CUMMINGTON

AUGUST THE SIXTEENTH

1894

NOVEMBER THE THIRD 1794 — NOVEMBER THE THIRD 1894

THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Clark W. Bryan Co. Printers,
Springfield, Mass.

THE LIBRARY
OF CONGRESS

Bryant Homestead.

TO JULIA S. BRYANT

Bryant Library Buildings.

# TO THE READER.

No word of introduction can add to the beauty or completeness of the tributes contained in this little volume. To many of the present generation, Bryant is still a gracious memory, but when the time shall arrive, in which his name and work is only a tradition to the inhabitants of his native town, and another centenary is reached, the curious antiquary or the devoted pilgrim, who seeks the spot where the first centennial was remembered, may wish to trace its landmarks, and some record of it may then be found needful.

At the annual town meeting it was voted to observe the hundredth anniversary of Bryant's birth by a literary festival, and a committee of five of the citizens was appointed to carry out this design.

The occasion was unique, not many days of the kind having been celebrated, for Bryant's birth marked the beginning of American Poetry, and American Literature was still in its childhood one hundred years ago. The day chosen was August sixteenth, as the pleasant summer time was deemed more suitable for an outdoor gathering, than the day of November on which the poet was born, which is often bleak and forbidding in its aspect. The spot selected had already become historic, for the poet and his brothers had traced, upon the trees around, rude hieroglyphics in years long past.

In a maple grove northwest of the Bryant homestead, where the younger children were born and all were reared, a central platform was raised and surrounded by seats rising from the front in the

form of an amphitheater. Upon a hickory tree, around which the platform was built, a lithograph portrait of Bryant was hung, encircled with wreaths and adorned with pendant sumac boughs. Around a table, banked with golden-rod and asters, were grouped some of America's most distinguished men of letters, who had come from far places to honor the memory of one who was one of America's first citizens as well as Cummington's foremost son. Nature smiled upon the day and the event, which was made memorable by the number of people who were present,—about five thousand climbing from all points, and from the towns in the distant valleys, to this remote hilltop. At ten o'clock a bird's-eye view would have presented a novel sight, when every approach, as far as the eye could see, was filled with slowly moving vehicles, until nearly a thousand had arrived, from the modern tally-ho to the improvised farm wagon, its sides trimmed with hemlock boughs. Through the arched entrance, trimmed with evergreens, the expectant crowd passed quickly to the grove, filling the seats, while some hundreds grouped themselves around these. The clouds lightly floating above and the sunlight glinting through the foliage upon the upturned faces, made the scene not only picturesque but impressive. The presence of the one surviving brother of the poet, and his only remaining daughter, added interest to the occasion, and the choice of his son-in-law as president of the day gave added dignity to the anniversary, which in itself was of the greatest interest to the people of this region. After the memorial address and songs, the people scattered in groups, to partake of their basket lunches. Some sought the "Rivulet," some the "Entrance to the Wood," or other haunts which suggested the lines of the poet, and the holiday aspect was in keeping with the simplicity and naturalness of the poet's life.

The dinner for the two hundred invited guests was served in the apple orchard nearly opposite the spacious barns, in the green carpeted passages formed by the rows of trees. After the collation had been served, again the people gathered in the grove to listen to the addresses of the afternoon, given in a somewhat lighter vein than those of the morning, interspersed with appropriate music, and at five o'clock the multitude departed with pleasant memories of this day of days, and we whose glad privilege it was to execute the wishes of the townspeople, hasten to make this lasting record before swift-footed time shall render such a work impossible.

# MY NATIVE VALE.

There stands a dwelling in a peaceful vale,
  With sloping hills and waving woods around,
Fenced from the blast. There never ruder gale
  Bows the tall grass that covers all the ground;
And planted shrubs are there, and cherished flowers,
And brightest verdure born of gentle showers.

'Twas there my young existence was begun;
  My earliest sports were on its flowery green:
And often, when my schoolboy task was done,
  I climbed its hills to view the pleasant scene,
And stood and gazed till the sun's setting ray
Shone on the height—the sweetest of the day.

There, when that hour of mellow light was come,
  And mountain shadows cooled the ripened grain,
I saw the weary yeoman plodding home
  In the lone path that winds across the plain,
To rest his limbs, and watch his child at play
And tell him o'er the labors of the day.

And when the woods put on their autumn glow,
  And the bright sun shone in among the trees,
And leaves were gathered in the den below,
  Swept softly from the hillside by the breeze,
I wandered, till the starlight, on the stream,
At length awoke me from my fairy dream.

Ah! happy days, too happy to return,
  Fled on the wings of youth's departed years;
A bitter lesson has been mine to learn,
  The truth of life, its labors, pains and fears,
Yet does the memory of my boyhood stay,
A twilight of the brightness passed away.

My thoughts steal back to that dear dwelling still,
  Its flowers and peaceful shades before me rise;
The play-place and the prospect from the hill,
  Its summer verdure and autumnal dyes;
The present brings its storms, but, while they last
I shelter seek in the delightful past.

JOHN HOWARD BRYANT.

Cummington Village.

# PROGRAMME

## Wednesday Evening,

at 7.30 o'clock.

Children's Memorial Exercises by the Bryant School and others at the Congregational Church.

## Thursday Morning,

at 10 o'clock.

March, "Washington Post," . . . . . . Souza.

orchestra.

PRAYER.

Anthem, "Sing ye Jehovah's praises."

Address of Welcome, . . . . Lorenzo H. Tower.

Address by President, . . . . Parke Godwin.

Memorial Address, . . . . Edwin R. Brown.

Duet, "O deem not they are blest alone," . .

Julie A. Shaw. Henrietta S. Nahmer.

Reading, A Monody, "The Rivulet," . . . . John H. Bryant.

Chorus, "The Battle Hymn of the Republic."

# PROGRAMME

THURSDAY AFTERNOON,

AT 2 O'CLOCK.

MARCH, "Old Homestead," . . .

ORCHESTRA.

READING OF LETTERS BY THE SECRETARY.

CHORUS, "A Forest Retreat."

ADDRESSES.

Hon. John Bigelow,

Julia Ward Howe,

Charles Dudley Warner.

DUET, "Old Friends are the Truest," . .

JOHN W. HUTCHINSON, E. LESTER BROWN.

READING, At Eighty-seven, . . . . John H. Bryant.

ADDRESSES.

Prof. Charles E. Norton,

Rev. John W. Chadwick,

George W. Cable.

CHORUS, "The Oaks," . . . . . . Verdi.

ADDRESSES.

Pres. G. Stanley Hall,

A. M. Howe, Esq.,

Henry S. Gere.

# INVOCATION.

By Rev. John White Chadwick.

> "Blessings be on them and eternal praise,
> Who gave us nobler lives and nobler cares;
> The poets who on earth have made us heirs
> Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays."

O Thou who art the life and heart of all this breathing world; we come together in a temple made by Thine own hands, to thankfully remember one who looked through Nature up to Thee, who found Thy visible presence in the strength of Thy eternal hills, Thy beauty in the trees and streams, Thy voice in the deep breathings of the storm, and in the silence of the night.

We thank Thee for the songs he sung, and that he made his life a great and noble poem, epical with a lofty purpose, and lyrical with many tender passages of love and home.

We are glad and thankful for those happy influences which issued from his life and work, opening our eyes to see the beauty and our hearts to feel the wonder of the fair and perfect world, and pleading with us to make ourselves the servants of all high causes, even such as make for the enlightenment and exaltation of our individual and common life. We thank Thee, O God, for all Thy poets who by their song have cheered and glorified our human lot, and especially for that noble company in our own land, of which our own Bryant was the eldest brother and of which one only now remains.

Very tenderly would we think of him to-day, desiring for him every blessing that belongs to the old age of one who has so often with sweet, guileless laughter cheered our burdened hearts. May this time of grateful recollection consecrate us, each and all, to a more wise and serious affection for the great things of nature and of art, and a more serene devotion to the welfare of our fellow-men.

We offer Thee, O God, these thanks and these desires with something of that proud humility which befits the children of Thy house. Amen.

After the invocation an orchestra of stringed instruments, accompanied by an organ, performed one of Sousa's marches, which was followed by the anthem, "Sing ye Jehovah's praises," rendered by a local chorus.

# ADDRESS OF WELCOME.

By Lorenzo H. Tower.

It was thought that a short address of welcome by a native resident of the town would be expected in accordance with the usual custom on occasions like this. It would seem proper that the host's welcome should be by deeds, not words, and a proper preparation to receive his guests. If this has been done, words of welcome are unnecessary; if neglected, any address, however eloquent, would be of no account. In applying this test, due consideration of the ability of the host and the number and wants of his guests should be kept in mind. Ours is a small mountain town, containing eight hundred souls all told, remote from the principal lines of travel, with limited hotel accommodations; and with the expectation that every home would be filled with personal and family friends, the prospect was not good for a successful result to-day.

With these and other disabilitities may we not indulge the hope that you will be charitable with our shortcomings. The welcome that Cummington extends to you to-day is substantially the same as greeted the embryo poet one hundred years ago. That the people are the same in kind is proven by the fact that of the two hundred voters in town but three are of foreign birth; the quality may have deteriorated, as the flower of our sons and daughters have gone forth to enrich other communities, nearly every home having furnished its full quota. There are but few of us left, but these few are willing to stand up and be counted.

Of the families that have lived at the Bryant Homestead for the last one hundred years, the first sent forth five sons and one daughter to make their homes outside of the town; of these but one remains to be with us to-day. Of the second, three sons and one daughter sought other homes, and from this family two are here to meet old friends. From the third, one daughter by adoption is with us to-day. This is perhaps an exceptional case, but it shows

the tendency of the population to leave the hill towns. Many homes have been abandoned, and their location is marked by a hollow in the ground where once was a cellar. In some parts of the town it is possible to find as many of these as of homes.

The occupation of the people is the same as of old, living wide apart to cultivate the soil, that is none too free with its return for the labor that is bestowed upon it.

The Westfield flows through its narrow valley ; the little villages nestle by its side as in the past; the amphitheater of hills and valleys that girt the eastern horizon are the same that Bryant's first conscious vision looked upon; the little brooks still murmur through their narrow glens; the groves, the darker woods, the sunny slopes where wild flowers bloom, all are here still to inspire other poets. The home that sheltered our poet from infancy to early manhood, the home to which he turned when fortune had smiled and the frost of age was upon hair and beard, making of it a fit place to spend a short season each year to renew his acquaintance with nature "through her visible forms," free from the cares of an exacting profession.

To all of these we welcome you ; without these nothing we could say or do would be worthy of a moment's consideration by you.

May we not hope that when time has softened your remembrance of the discomforts and fatigue of the journey, you may not wholly regret that in 1894 you made the pilgrimage to Cummington, to the home of Bryant, one of the best of his race, one of the poets of the world.

# REMARKS

OF J. W. GURNEY, Chairman of the Committee of Arrangements on Opening the Exercises at the Bryant Centennial Celebration.

*Ladies and Gentlemen:*

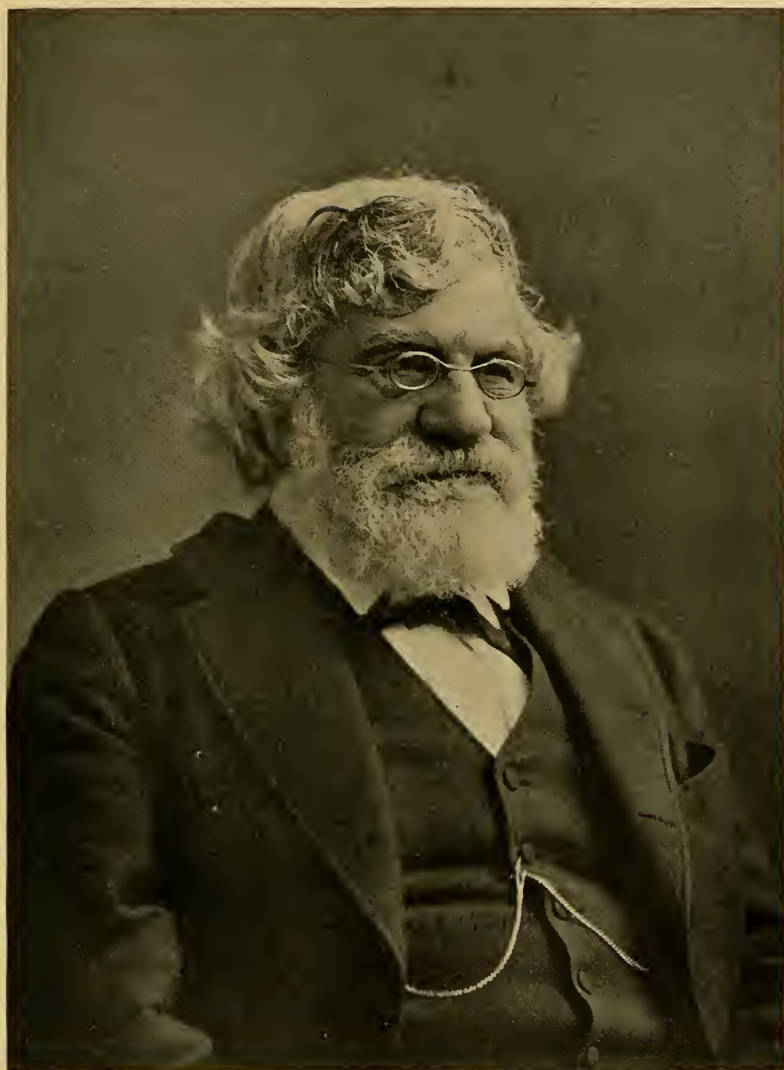
We have assembled here this beautiful summer morning to celebrate the hundredth anniversary of an event that has made this historic ground. These valleys, these wooded hills, the little sparkling rivulet that goes leaping and laughing down the mountain side, have all been immortalized by the pen of Bryant. Some one living in what he imagined to be a more favored region has slightingly remarked that all our "New England hills were good for was to help hold the world together; that their principal productions were ice and granite."

Well, I have always believed they played an important part in the earth's make-up, and they furnish plenty of ice and granite for home consumption, and yet they boast grander products. We raise men and women who are constantly going out from us, taking with them New England's best gifts, virtue, intelligence and industry.

> New England's hills, old earth's mainstay—
>   Steadfast and reliant—
> Let it forever be their boast
>   That they produced a Bryant.

My friends, you have gathered here from many sections of our great country, to unite with us in honoring the name and memory of Cummington's noblest son, and as the centuries follow each other down time's calendar, the people of Cummington will ever cherish the memory of William Cullen Bryant. But the name of Bryant is not the heritage of Cummington alone; it is the birthright of every American citizen, and in arranging the programme of these exercises we have not confined ourselves to any section,

or been restrained by any boundary lines. We are exceedingly fortunate in having with us to-day a gentleman whose intimate social and business relations with Mr. Bryant for many years make it eminently fitting that he should take a prominent part in these exercises. I now have the distinguished honor of introducing to you Mr. Parke Godwin, as president of the day.



Parke Godwin, President of the Day.

# ADDRESS.

BY PRESIDENT PARKE GODWIN.

*Ladies and Gentlemen:*

Dr. Samuel Johnson said that "the man is little to be envied whose patriotism would not gain force on the plain of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of Iona."

He meant by this that localities acquire by mere historic association a power which stirs the minds and hearts of men to their fountains. Such a locality is this, and assuredly no American can visit these hills without feeling his whole nature exalted by the consciousness that here one of the first and most eminent of American poets, one of the first and most energetic of American citizens, William Cullen Bryant, was born. It was here, a hundred years ago, that his infant eyes first opened to the light of the heavens; here that his childish limbs first tottered among the flowers of the earth, and here that he first played upon the banks of the rivulet, which prattled from grove to grove while he cropped the violets from its brim, and listened to the brown thrush's vernal hymn. It was here that he turned his first artless notes to the whisper of the wind, or to the song of the birds; it was here, amid this scenery, which combines so much that is grand with so much that is beautiful, that he imbibed that love of nature which made him, in after life, her most faithful painter, knowing every tree, every flower, every spire of grass, every sound of the winged tribes, and every play of the winds among the trees, every aspect of the seasons, the luxuriant fullness of summer, the melancholy yet many-colored decay of autumn, and even the charm of winter, when the bleak blast disrobes the forests, and oceans of snow had almost drowned the landscape, but the sunrises and sunsets were yet as glorious as any of Italy, and the delicate fingers of the frost built in the woods its palaces of amethyst and topaz. It was here, lying before the even-

ing birch fire, that he read the Bible and Shakespeare, Homer as Pope gives him, and Cowper and Wordsworth; it was here, among the thickets, that he shouted to his brothers grand lines from the Iliad or the Œdipus Tyrrannus; it was here that he heard from the lips of veterans who had taken part in the strife, the stories of Bunker Hill and Concord and Trenton and Saratoga; it was here that he caught the first bitterness of politics, as thundered around the name of Jefferson, and it was here that he learned the better lessons taught by nature's "sweet and gentle ministrations."

It was from this place went forth the first articulate poetic utterance of the great soul of the western world, Thanatopsis, grave and sombre in its theme suggested by the immense and impenetrable solitude of the wilderness around, where the silent work of death is ever going on, as it has been from the beginning and will be to the end of time, but treated with such rare depth and breadth of thought, with such brilliancy of imagination and with such an organ flow of music, it has captivated the universal human mind and imbedded and enshrined itself in immortal memory. Thanatopsis was the morning star of our poetic dawn, opening the way to the broader day that was to follow; but in the flush and effulgence of a broader light, but still holding its place in the skies as a luminary that is destined never to set.

But the mere active life of Mr. Bryant was not passed amid these solitudes which, while they nourished his genius by their many appeals to the imagination, to fancy, to reverence and to thought, could not supply his more practical needs. He must go into the larger world which lay beyond their summits, and sad was the hour when he was compelled to leave them. It was in the early winter of the year when alone, without prosperity and almost without friends, he took his way up yonder steep road to Plainfield, to enter the unknown yet inviting vortex of actual combat. His heart was despondent, but a lustrous sunset suffused the mountains and he saw a solitary bird making its flight through the desert and illimitable air, to its far home among the reeds, and he thought

"There is a Power whose care teaches thy way along that pathless coast," and it came to him as a solace and support, that

> " He who from zone to zone
> Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight,
> In the long way that I must tread alone
> Will lead my steps aright."

And that Power did lead him aright when he was launched upon that vast ocean of struggle and turmoil and toil which is ever seething in the metropolis of a nation.

I was much impressed some years ago in an interview with John Bright, when he told me that he "never went to bed without reading some of the poets, to lure his mind away from the distractions of Parliament—which is often a cockpit—and to invigorate his imagination," and he added, "I read your poets in preference to ours, not because they are greater poets, but because they are greater citizens. Your Bryant, your Emerson, your Longfellow, your Whittier, and your Lowell take part in the common life of the nation, and all are better poets because they are completer men."

Their inspiration comes not from the society in which they live, and has the freshness and impulse of liberty, nature and the present age.

This was particularly true of Mr. Bryant, who from his childhood to his old age mingled in the active life of the public. From the time in which he sang his crude Fourth of July odes and as a boy satirized Jefferson, to the time in which he upheld the arms of Lincoln during the war, and deplored his death in a dirge, whose words like flight of angels lulled our aching hearts, he held it to be one of his first duties to participate in all the movements which influenced the politics of the state. He went down into the arena and grappled with the fighters. But in every struggle he kept his eye steadily fixed on certain ideas, which like the Star of the Pole keeps its old unvarying station. Other stars rise and set, or file away in glittering trains, to sink ultimately behind the horizon, but that star is the unfailing guide of the half-wrecked mariner when his

compass is lost, and assures the steps of those who stray in darkest wastes by night. To Mr. Bryant, that guiding star was his conviction of duty to the development and good of the individual man.

He was no doctrinaire, for he always pursued even ideal ends through actual available means, but one trust seemed clearer to him than any other and that was that the aim of all religion, of all morals, of all social progress was the elevation and upraising of man to the full dignity of his nature. And he inferred that such should be the final aim of all politics.

Mr. Bryant was the advocate from the beginning of his public career of perfect freedom of speech and of assembly; he was the enemy, from the beginning, of that hideous system of slavery which had got the nation in its clutch, and he was ever the sedulous, considerate and irrepressible opponent of that other system of industrial servitude, which under the pretext of general protection fosters special trades, monopolies and trusts, lures a pernicious immigration and prepares the way for division of classes and anarchical outbreaks and bloodshed. In the defense of these views Mr. Bryant was cast into the furnace of debate, where his sensitive, nervous organization suffered severely, but he controlled himself with moderation and contributed as much as any other one man to the triumph of liberal principles, in the release of his fellow-men from a degrading bondage. In these efforts he was in advance of his day, for the battle is not yet won; but he lived to see an emancipated race, a regenerated union, and the republic of his love, the mightiest power upon earth and destined to be mightier, as the freedom which he advocated shall extend its benificent arms to broader circles of activity.

It is not my province, upon this occasion, to speak in detail of this public career, which was at once so eminent and so exemplary. That theme has been reserved for other and more eloquent lips. But as it has been the one great good fortune of my life to be associated with Mr. Bryant privately for more than fifty years, I cannot refrain from saying a word of what I deem greater than the poet, greater than the publicist, greater than the patriot, and that

is the source and substance of all the rest—the man. As a brother poet, Whittier, has written :—

> " We praise not now the poet's art,
> The rounded beauty of his song;
> Who weighs him from his life apart,
> Must do his nobler nature wrong."

Every day that I saw him, whether in his domestic circle, or amid the vicissitudes of trying public contests (and he lived through the terrible battle era of the Republic), added to my estimate of his completeness as a human being. Modest he was with the shyness of the sensitive young girl who like a violet had passed the days in silence and shade; humble he was with the humility of one who asked no applause from his fellows, and disinterested to the part of an almost absolute self-negation; and yet with so strong a sense of self-respect, so earnest a worship of truth, so unswerving a fidelity to his convictions, that he feared no enmity, no calumny, no loss of ease or fame, in the discharge of what he deemed his duty. A world in arms against him had no terrors for his simple soul.

Mr. Bryant was deemed by many to be cold in his manner, even to chilliness. Among strangers he was singularly reserved. But once you broke through this atmosphere of reticence, you found in the inside the genial humorist who loved fun, the warm-hearted comrade, and a keen sympathizer with all sorts of human suffering and sorrow.

His affections were not demonstrative, but they were sincere and profound. To his children he was the cheerful companion, and they loved him none the less because of their reverence for him. One affection indeed ran like a silver lining through all the tissues of his being, from the time when first he met his Fanny,

> " The fairest of the rural maids
> Whose birth was in the forest shades."

All his personal attachments, though slow in their formation, once formed were like hooks of steel. He never abandoned a friend; he never, if he could help it, misjudged an enemy. Once

when he had been severely calumniated by a newspaper opponent he said to me, "Will you not answer that fellow? I dislike him so much I may do him an injustice." His purse was ever open to a charity; not always, in the exuberance of his pity, judicious. Hundreds were uniting to say, when he was gone, that their saintly providence was lost. I do not know in history a more impressive picture than that which is furnished by the old age of Mr. Bryant gliding "in long serenity away." In easy circumstances, the acknowledged patriarch of our literature, the idol not merely of friends, but of a wide public, every day he gave to some honorable or useful occupation, to a translation of Homer, to a patriotic address, to a cheery feast to the children of the village, to a great meeting for the furtherance of human welfare, to a letter of encouragement to some struggling young author, or to the reading and review of some good recent books. A friend at Roslyn, who walked with him on his last Sunday on earth, says:

"I turned to take my leave and saw him standing bareheaded in the sun, his face towards the sparkling waters of the bay, his white locks and beard just moved by the passing breeze and he looking like one of the bards of the Bible, in the rapture of devotion; or better still as an image of Homer himself listening to the murmuring waves of his own blue Ægean."

Mr. Bryant died in his eighty-fourth year, and the last words that he uttered in public were in aspiration for the coming of that universal religion and soul liberty when the rights and dislikes of human brotherhood shall be acknowledged by all the races of mankind.

The chief address of the day was given by Edwin R. Brown, one of Cummington's sons, who was especially fitted by good literary taste and judgment and the associations of many years, to perform this delicate and important task.

Edwin R. Brown, Orator of the Day.

# MEMORIAL ADDRESS.

By Edwin R. Brown.

*Mr. President and Ladies and Gentlemen:*

> " I stand upon my native hills again,
> Broad, round and green, that in the summer sky
> With garniture of waving grass and grain,
> Orchards, and beechen forests, basking lie,
> While deep the sunless glens are scooped between,
> Where brawl o'er shallow beds the streams unseen.
>
> " This mountain wind ! most spiritual thing of all
> The wide earth knows ; when, in the sultry time
> He stoops him from his vast cerulean hall
> He seems the breath of a celestial clime !
> As if from heaven's wide-open gates did flow
> Health and refreshment on the world below."

" Perfect love casteth out fear." Otherwise how should I find courage to speak in such a presence as graces this platform this morning? I am not here to speak to you as a literatus at all, but rather to talk with you from the standpoint of that great public which has never ranged far in the nourishing fields of literature, but which long ago learned to love Bryant and to feel its indebtedness to him for eyes to see the face and ears to hear the voice of nature.

To-day the fountains of joy and tears lie side by side and their waters intermingle. Our tears sparkle with joy and our rejoicing is pathetic. Salutation quickly turns to valediction, for to most of us this occasion will be a dissolving view of these dear scenes, where cluster and twine the memories of delightful years.

We are gathered here from distant states, and from over sea, for mutual congratulation, while we look across one of those broad billows of time that we call centuries, and recall the life of Cummington's foremost son, a wonderful life in a wonderful century. Of the group of large-brained and stout-hearted brothers and

sisters of whom William Cullen Bryant was the bright particular star, all were born amid these rural scenes, and here they passed their youth. They scattered widely in their life work, but as time thinned their numbers and whitened their locks, you have seen the decreasing group returning here in summer days, venerable white-bearded druids, seeking their early forest haunts and re-living the days of youth. Now there remains of them all "on this bank and shoal of time" one only, to join in our commemoration, only one, a solitary picturesque and pathetic figure, the last of a splendid generation.

The chief of that group found well-earned fame and fortune in the great metropolis; the rest with their feet planted on the fair prairies of Illinois and their heads in the wide upper currents of free thinking and noble living, grew straight and tall and strong. The inevitable reaper has spared us John Howard Bryant, and thank Heaven he is with us to-day in a fair state of health. "Full of days" and good works, honored and beloved, he carries off his eighty-seven years with brain unscathed and a brave and cheerful spirit. "Winter is on his head, but eternal sunshine is in his heart." Long may his departure be delayed!

I see in this gathering little of the Cummington of old. The honored and beloved, the tried and true of the old days are mostly sleeping under the mountain turf. But the well-remembered outline of the grand old hills and vales remains as it was when the "Inscription" was written for the entrance to yonder wood. These venerable beeches, too, on whose mottled bark the poet carved his name eighty-five or ninety years ago, still lift their green crowns in regal glory high into the sweet mountain air.

The people of this region may well cherish their great poet's memory, for there is not a rustic homestead, a bird of the woods, a gurgling brook, or a murmuring pine on all these solitary hills that has not its added dower of beauty from his immortal words. "He gave these glory and made them dear." Every farmer who mows the perfumed fields, or hears the summer rain pattering on the green flags of his corn, finds life better worth living, for the life that

began here one hundred years ago. Much that is most precious here was Bryant's by right of discovery, but he has left us the keys to that ideal estate, for our own use and behoof forever. It is an estate compared with which that willed by Cæsar to the citizens of Rome was a bagatelle. Other poets with their masks of hysteric joy or gaunt despair, with blaring bugles or sweetly modulated pipes, came and went, but to us of farm, and home, and shop the pageant was hollow and touched us not.

Then there came, from just over the summit of a past century, a Green Mountain youth, without bugle or banner, or misty phrase, singing in words as simple and sweet as the notes of the hermit thrush, songs of field and forest and stream, and lo, all the face of nature is changed! We cannot explain this. The secret of genius eludes us. One thing we know, that whereas we were blind, now we see.

Bryant's serene genius has thrown a charm over this mountain region, which makes the Westfield and the "Rivulet" sacred in literature like the Avon and the Doon.

We can well imagine with what pomp and circumstance the ancient Greeks would have celebrated the centenary of so illustrious a citizen. But we know the moderation our poet loved. This great and hearty, but rustic and unpretentious demonstration would surely have pleased him. I have no sympathy with the emotion-hunting spirit that runs back with literal keg and bottle to bring home water from the Jordan or the Rubicon. We have an intense interest, however, in all that lies about us here, for here the poet and his brothers wrought with ax and flail, and the mothers and sisters made Æolian music on the spinning wheel.

Of Bryant and his "Green River" Halleck said some seventy years ago:—

> "Spring's loveliest flowers for many a day
> Have blossomed on his wandering way;
> Beings of beauty and decay
> They slumber in their autumn tomb;
> But those that grace his own Green River
> Charmed by his song from mortal doom,
> Bloom on, and will bloom on forever."

It is a great satisfaction to us who are native to this vicinity, but who have long dwelt in more prosaic regions, that Bryant's birth and early experiences were here, for to these scenes that gentle magician Distance lends many a tender enchantment. You know his birthplace just over Meeting House hill yonder, with the graveyard just across the road—the cradle and the grave in literal juxtaposition. But this farm was soon made the home, and a delightful home it was. Where else on this continent does winter give such a delightful privacy of storm? Where is spring so ardent and gushing when she finally leaps from the lap of winter as here? Where is there a June so tender? And certainly there is nowhere else anything quite equal to that little cluster of bewitching November days which you call Indian summer when the Indian sun-god, composing himself for his winter's sleep, fills his great pipe and divinely smokes away the hours, filling all the autumn landscape with soft blue haze. It always did seem to me that these hills should be the home of poetry, and that here the eagle of freedom should build and keep his eyrie forever.

While we are proud of the many distinguished honors paid to our beloved poet, by civic bodies and academic institutions at home and in foreign lands, so modestly borne by him; proud of every year of his long history, we to-day, meeting on the hallowed ground of the old homestead, will recall more fully the early life and its pleasing suggestions than the latter days of assured honor and world-wide renown.

In a time like the present, when unrest is deep and widespread and the ground of social order heaves and cracks under our feet, it is rest and refreshment to turn to the contemplation of a character as serene and imperturbable as old Greylock; to rehearse the words and ways of a poet, who, in his boldest flight of imagination, never loses sight of the solid ground of fact and common sense.

Great men are apt to have great vices to match their intellectual power. When Edward Everett pronounced the eulogy of a certain great statesman, he was much admired for his adriotness in avoiding

unpleasant chapters in the statesman's life; but here we have a life no chapter and no line of which calls for glossing or omission.

Bryant was a marvel, but no miracle. He was the result of high and favoring conditions, among which is the fact that he came of a line sound in physique, strong of brain, and eminent for virtue; and that the perspective of his Pilgrim lineage runs back to John Alden and Priscilla Mullins under the bows of the Mayflower.

Certain of the higher race qualities seem difficult of transmission; nevertheless according to Emerson, "by painting and repainting them upon every individual they are at last adopted by nature and baked into her porcelain." Strength and integrity characterized the line. None of its members would answer to Elder John Leland's description of a certain Berkshire county saint, of whom he said that "Godward he was a very good man indeed, but manward he was a leėtle grain twistical." There was nothing even a leetle grain twistical in this stock. In Bryant's parentage there was a happy combination of Cavalier and Puritan in temperament. Dr. Peter Bryant, genial, scholarly, over-generous, poetic, broad-minded; Mrs. Bryant, plodding, persistent, energetic, scrupulous as the laws of light; what happier race mixture could be desired? The poet's grandfather Snell was Abrahamic and severe in faith. He had a vein of humor in him, but a joke from Squire Snell was like a comic cherub carved on one of your old-time mica-slate tombstones. To little Cullen the "Squire" who lived in the Doctor's family was a cave of gloom, while his mother was his reliance, and his father was sunshine and inspiration.

Dr. Bryant wisely provided appetizing and nourishing pasturage of books on which his children could browse at will, such as Little Jack, Sanford and Merton, Evenings at Home, and the like, following with histories, the poets and the best periodicals in which, of course, good Dr. Channing shone a star of the first magnitude. From these treasures grew the poet's early and life-long interest in the Greeks and in their struggles for liberty. Yonder stood the barn in which on rainy days the boys Austin and Cullen, with old hats for helmets and plumes of tow, fought over again the battles of the

Greeks and Trojans. The doctor's high and genial qualities drew to his hospitable fireside the best brains of the region, and from their Socratic discussions the boy poet absorbed much that no conventional school could have given him. Here was also the virgin forest for a playground, where his mind became stored with those natural images and analogies which he used with such magic effect in all the after years. These gave to his figures that roundness and life that distinguished them from the silhouette of the parlor poet.

Except for the companionship of a scholarly father, and the many visitors at the home, Bryant's boyhood passed like that of other lads in this region, though he must often have felt stirring within him higher thoughts and sweeter dreams than he could share with his rustic companions. The meager winter school, the meeting-house solemn and cold, standing cheek by jowl with the tavern jolly and warm, the great stage and the driver's mellow horn, the postrider bringing the Hampshire Gazette, militia trainings on Meeting-House green, raisings, huskings, apple bees and singing schools; these, as well as hard work, were features of the time, and best of all, that genuine civic "university extension," the New England town meeting, that most precious institution, brought from the Netherlands by the Pilgrim Fathers,—the town meeting, at which the town, man and boy, gathered en masse, the men to discuss and vote, and the boys to learn the meaning and methods of public affairs; a model school of public business and debate. The March meeting was the Massachusetts House of Commons, and the orthodox pulpit was its House of Lords. At the last town meeting I ever attended in Cummington,—and it was in the old Baptist meeting-house, more than forty years ago, a building of historic interest, sadly swept from the landscape by fire only last week,—we of the abolition side were defeated by a close vote, but when that fact was announced, Alden Tower, earnest soul of blessed memory, leaped upon a bench and shouted,

> "Truth crushed to earth will rise again;
> The eternal years of GOD are hers."

We felt instantly reassured and almost triumphant. Oh! how often to the reformer harried and buffeted in the long struggle with ignorance and shame and wrong have those lines been the refreshing shadow of a great rock in a weary land. And such they will be while the language endures. I often wonder whether we should ever have had from Bryant a Thanatopsis or a Forest Hymn if our present mediocrity-making school system with its constant competitive examinations and its markings and child prizes, had been in vogue a hundred years ago. I do not believe we should. Far better was it for the boy Bryant to listen to Socratic discussions by his father's broad fireside, or to the nooning debates of the sturdy farmers as they ate their rye and Indian bread and cheese on the steps of the old yellow meeting-house. These discussions were largely political, the majority of the people of this region, led by Dr. Bryant, being zealous Federalists; as over in Cheshire they were almost unanimously Jeffersonians under the lead of John Leland. It was the very time of which Wendell Phillips used to tell when Massachusetts mothers frightened their children to sleep by saying "Thomas Jefferson." But the boy poet had learned to reason, and so though as a boy he gave his satire free rein on Jefferson and his "Embargo," in due time he became an honored leader of the Jeffersonian forces of the land.

One word more about Dr. Peter Bryant. It may perhaps be said that in this case William Cullen comes up, like the bean in the adage, bringing his father on his back; but however that may be, the doctor seems to have been a rare and noble character, fit to stand by the side of Thackeray's good Dr. London. His early death no doubt resulted from his self-sacrificing faithfulness and exposure in his profession. When he had talked with his fellow physicians and had found his own view confirmed that his months were few, he still went about as usual, healing, cheering, soothing, and many had cause to bless him. To his family he said no sad word, but lived among them cheerful and tender, calm and loving, though he knew the night was at hand when he should see and work for them no more.

No Greek or Roman matron of heroic days left a more spotless record of a busy life than the poet's mother. To her example he attributes his rigid adherence, in riper years, to the great rule of right without regard to persons. She was in person tall, agile and strong. At the age of sixty-seven she was still an expert horse-woman and could vault from the ground into the saddle. This agility and strength were characteristic of the line. Many of you know that the poet, even in his later rambles about the place here, never climbed over the stone fences, but placing his hand on the top, easily vaulted over. It was the poet's mother who induced her boys to set the good example of planting out maples and elms by the roadside. I wish that some man with a heart in his bosom would select the finest of those trees and on its breast inlay a tablet with the name of Sallie Snell Bryant upon it; then let every thoughtful passer-by in the summer time salute its pomp and plentitude of green, and give it a cheerful hail even when winter winds howl through its branches.

The poet's mother kept a most remarkable diary. Not such as most of us keep, which after the first week or two of the new year is left to perish of neglect, but she kept one for fifty-three solid years without the break of a day. Every day has, in her own hand, a condensed record of weather, household work, and family and neighborhood events. Nothing was allowed to interfere. Company, sickness, journeys, births, death itself made no break in this record. Each year has its quaint little volume, the paper being cut and bound by her own hands and sewed with linen thread of her own spinning. The poet's reticence, his steadfastness and his life-long care never to say the wrong word are foreshadowed in this diary. The Chinese have a proverb that when the wrong word escapes a chariot and four cannot overtake it. Neither the poet nor his mother allowed any such word to escape. This kind, persistent woman—described by King Lemuel long ago—in all the nearly twenty thousand entries of the diary, makes no complaint, speaks no unpleasant word of a neighbor, and utters never a syllable of gush. Where can this be matched?

One entry is of especial interest on this occasion. It is not underscored, there are no exclamation points, yet it marks an era in literature.

Nov. 3, 1794. Stormy. Wind N. E. Churned. Seven in the evening a son born.

Two days later the record is:

Nov. 5, 1794. Clear. Wind N. W. Made Austin a coat. Sat up all day. Went into the kitchen. Mr. Dawes died (grandfather of ex-Senator Dawes).

From the record for 1811, the year in which Thanatopsis was written, we find that Cullen was at Williams College, and returned in May and the boys go fishing. A calf was killed, but whether in honor of the student's return is not stated. In December, 1811, he goes to Worthington to study law with Mr. Howe, and he goes wearing the great coat his mother cut and made for him. It also appears from the diary that she cut and made the brown broadcloth suit which the doctor wore in the Massachusetts Senate. Still on and on the diary goes, till at Princeton, in the winter of 1847 it records her fall, and the breaking of a hip, but there is no break in the record which tells the weather, the kindness of friends, the coming and going of fugitive slaves on the Underground Railroad; the last tremulous entry being made by her own hand on the last day of her life May 1st, 1847.

In the lines beginning,

"The May sun sheds an amber light,"

Bryant speaks tenderly of his mother.

"Upon the woodland's moving airs
The small birds' mingled notes are flung,
But she whose voice more sweet than theirs,
Once bade me listen while they sung,
Is in her grave
Low in her grave."

Some part of our poet's education was secured in the family of Moses Hallock in yonder hamlet of Plainfield. On the list of students, who from time to time studied with Mr. Hallock and

boarded in his family, on rye and Indian bread and milk (it was known as the "Bread and Milk College") at the munificent rate of a dollar and a quarter a week, I find the names of William C. Bryant, Jonathan Dawes, Jonas King the missionary, John Brown of Harper's Ferry and Dr. Royal Joy, whose erect figure and calomel-loaded saddle bags were long familiar on these hills. A fresh impulse from some unrecognized source was given to men's minds in the early years of the present century. There was a revival of poetry in many lands and a liberation from old forms, bringing in a simpler style and a closer clinging to the breast of nature. In our own country New England gave us six giants of poetry at a birth—Bryant, Emerson, Whittier, Longfellow, Lowell, and Holmes. Across the sea there arose almost simultaneously a similar group—Wordsworth, Scott, Byron, Coleridge, Keats, and Tennyson. Of the American group all were born in this little heaven-favored state of Massachusetts, except Longfellow, and he quickly made the Bay State his home. A poet is not necessarily an abnormal and improvident being. All the American group came of sound and well-regulated families and all had charming households of their own. All were tested by the Ithuriel spear of the slavery question and all proved stanch and true. All were religious and sang and lived that elder and eternal religion that is always true, while theologies and mythologies pass away. We are therefore not surprised to find them all reaching a good old age,—Lowell seventy-two, Longfellow seventy-five, Emerson eighty, Bryant eighty-four, Whittier eighty-six, and one, Dr. Holmes, wearing as evenly as the "One Hoss Shay," lingers "the last leaf upon the tree" at eighty-five. There are said to be languages in which there is no word corresponding to our word home. With our poets that word is the central sun around which language revolves.

Wordsworth first caught the new spirit on the British side of the sea, as did Bryant on the American.

Bryant and Wordsworth have much in common. There is the same simplicity and exquisite fitness of language and nearness to nature; the same tenderness and the same sense of the equilibrium

of the universe, " no great and no small to the soul that maketh all." The American sestette was led strangely enough by a boy of seventeen; led, too, not on some new and captivating theme, but on a topic as old as the race and as trite as old. Carlyle wanted to postpone poetry to a future and more fitting age, yet youth and beauty have found no sweeter expression than in pagan poets, dead many centuries ago. But from all the long line from Homer down to the present hour, it was reserved for Bryant, beyond any other, to complete nature's circuit and make even old age and death grand and sweet.

Let us recall for a moment Bryant's rare personality. There was an indefinable something in his whole aspect that at once conveyed the impression of a nature reverend, robust and grand. He was erect in figure, always squarely standing on both feet, a mental as well as a physical characteristic. His head and face, like his first great poem, seemed to belong to all ages of the world. What a capital model it would have furnished for a gigantic sculpture on the pediment of the Parthenon! Some faces carry their date and all their story in the lines of expression. The whole book is printed on the cover. Bryant's deeply carved countenance is hieroglyphic and belonged to antediluvian, postdiluvian, or current time, according to your imagination. Keen eyes peering out from the shadow of overhanging brows, did not hold you like the glittering eye of the ancient mariner, but they penetrated to your very marrow. He was always neatly dressed, for he had none of the small " pride that apes humility." Antisthenes, the cynic, affected a ragged coat; but Socrates said to him, " Antisthenes, I can see your vanity peering out through the holes of your coat." Bryant carefully observed the proprieties of good society. He knew very well what was due to his own position, but felt no sense of incongruity in the company of shirt-sleeved laborers, nor would he, like Scott's Sir Piercie Shaftoe, blush to lead the farmer's daughter out to dinner or the dance. He was reticent; even with old acquaintances he did not conceal altogether his distaste for those pretty conventional fibs and nothings that come of " making " talk. He loved to have

with him on a long stroll an original-minded and suggestive friend, who could enjoy the companionship of silence, and take a great deal for granted. Webster had a talent for sleep. Bryant had a talent for solitude and silence. He must have often felt like saying as did little Paul Dombey at the seaside, to the sympathetic, chattering children around him, "Go away, if you please; thank you, thank you, but I don't want you."

The lover is never lonely with his mistress. Bryant being profoundly in love with nature, was no more lonely with wind and cloud in these wide pastures and deep woods, than amid the stacks of stone and brick, and the everlasting din of wheels and hustling crowds of Fulton street and Broadway. Even there his inner ear still heard the rustle of the birches and the soft purr of "Roaring Brook" falling into its cool, rocky basins.

Bryant's power of acquiring knowledge was so prodigious and his industry so unremitting that in effect he lived two or three centuries. His wonderful memory was not like that of Robert Hondin, the prestidigitateur, a dragnet raking in everything good, bad and indifferent. Only that which had merit of some kind was retained. He would wear no title. What title could add anything to that of Mr. Bryant or Mr. Gladstone, each the chief citizen of his own country? The popular notion that he was of cold, impassive temperament was not without excuse, though the truth is that he had, on the contrary, rather a torrid temper. His whole life having been a struggle to overcome imperfections of every kind, he came at last to hold an air-brake control of himself, and became one of the gentlest of men.

One, however, who should at any time presume to impugn his personal integrity, or to kill the wild birds on his premises, would become aware of heat under the cool exterior.

Bryant secured nothing of what is called "passional training"—Lord save the mark!—by the sacrifice of women's hearts, as did Goethe and Byron and Burns. The windows of his soul were open to veracity, courage and virtue, and these angels brought him the gift of tongues and of song. Every public meeting at Athens at

a certain period of its history, was opened with a curse on any one who should not speak what he really thought. Bryant was one of the few for whom such a curse would have had no terrors. He was first of all truthful, the very antipode of the demagogue. Like the planets in their courses, Bryant was never idle, never behind time, and never in a hurry. Though ravished by the order and beauty of the universe, the Snell in his nature would never allow him to burst into a volcanic frenzy like poor Keats. Though he made many voyages to Europe and elsewhere, the record of which makes charming chapters in his biography, he remained the most American of our poets. He belongs to the soil and skies of his native land as distinctly as the bison and the bald eagle.

He was an optimist with the serene assurance of great and earnest souls, that the universe is sound and God is well. His faith was like the eternal sunset in Faust, where every height is on fire, and every vale is in repose. Browning vociferates the same sentiment and with such passionate vehemence as almost to make us doubt the writer's confidence in his own shouting. He cries,

> " Iterate, reiterate, snatch it from the hells,
> Circulate and meditate that God is well,
> Pay the ringers to ring it; put it in the mouths of the bells,
> Get the singers to sing it, that God is well."

In calmer and loftier strains, Bryant leads us on to serener heights where the same glorious assurance opens upon us,

> " With warmth and certainty and boundless light."

Bryant's poetry is like the playing of actors, like Booth and Joe Jefferson, artists who never descend to sentimentality or sensationalism in order to please those who are to see the play but once. A commoner poet might at first produce a stronger effect.

But gradually absolute fidelity to nature " attunes our taste to a faultless execution." So in the poetry of Bryant there may at first appear a lack of fire, but, like everything truly beautiful, it is a continual revelation and we come at last to listen to him as to nature herself, and to resent the slightest alteration in the text even by the author himself.

Thanatopsis must be counted the most remarkable of short poems. The extreme youth of the author, and the fact that the existence of the poem was a secret shared with no human being, for five years at least give it a mystery and marvel which add to its grandeur. It is the vastest figure of Death ever drawn. As it was written here when the family was intact, it has special interest on this occasion. To Bryant the subject, though old as Arcturus and Orion, is new and untried. He tells us what we knew full well before, but tells it with such power and fitness, that he seems to be the original discoverer, and to have rescued the fact from chaos.

We can well imagine Milton saying to Bryant, as he said to another, "After so glorious a performance you ought to do nothing that is mean and little, not so much as to think of anything but what is great and sublime." If any such injunction was heard by our author, grandly did he heed it.

When as a boy of eight or ten years of age, I sat on the "little seats" in the old red schoolhouse over yonder hill, the bigger boys and girls sometimes had Thanatopsis for a reading lesson, even then a vague wonder arose in my mind why it was that to hear the minister talk of death made my flesh creep and my heart sink, while to hear Thanatopsis, though the theme was the very same, was soothing and exalting. Doubtless this was in part due to the large way in which the subject is reviewed in the poem, the magnificent vastness and universality of death, taking away the feeling of loneliness and gloom; it was even a little flattering—"Thou shalt lie down with patriarchs of the infant world, with kings," and so on. And perhaps it was also the deep sea roll of its rhythm and the exquisite fitness of language which even a child could feel, and whose beauty not even the shambling clumsiness of rustic readers could altogether mar or hide. There is nothing in it pitiful or distressing as in Addison's "Vision of Mirza" with its terrible bridge in the valley of Bagdad, but all was grand, orderly and serene.

Sitting in the northeast section of the wide gallery in the "Old Meet'n House" on Meet'n House Hill, might have been seen, in the summer of 1811, a handsome youth, who seemed to be listen-

ing decorously to the long homilies poured forth by good Parson Briggs, from the high pulpit, in which the preacher seemed to be going to sea in a bowl. (Parson Briggs, by the way, was ordained in this very grove one hundred and sixteen years ago.) But really the thoughts of the youth in the wide gallery were wandering in God's first temples, and he was listening to

"Airs from viewless Eden blown,"

for "Thanatopsis" was then taking form in his mind. How little the grave and stately minister dreamed that when eighty years should have rolled away the soliloquy of the handsome youth would be known and admired in all civilized lands and languages, while his own faithful and sonorous messages of fifty-two consecutive years would have passed with the tall pulpit and sounding board from which they were promulgated to a deep and common forgetfulness!

"Thanatopsis" is the soliloquy of youth, yet forgotten nations, extinguished constellations and the living present seem to be reverently listening and adding their solemn amen. It was not written for fame nor to propagate a theory. Beecher in a discourse delivered soon after the poet's death, pronounced "Thanatopsis" a pagan poem. Well, it is the poem of the human race and that includes the pagan. It is pagan, as the air and the Pleiades and the Zodiac are pagan. We all instantly agree that what is said is the exact truth, but if there were a theory, the more exact the statement of it the more certain we should be of disagreement. It was no more affected by authorities or financial considerations than the "flight of years" itself. It is Nature's own voice, spoken through the clear brain of an ingenuous youth. The poem is unique in what it says and in what it does not say. Though the author lived in the midst of fierce and continual theological pronouncement, there is not in the poem the slightest allusion to any system of faith, to a deity or even to a future state of existence. There is no side issue, no tub to any whale of public opinion, but death is quietly and surely restored to its proper place in the universal order. It is the one great poem to which a date is an impertinence. It fits

as perfectly for ten thousand years ago or ten thousand years hence as for to-day.

Our chairman (Mr. Parke Godwin) has happily said somewhere that "Poetry is the steeping of the palpable and familiar in the glorious dyes of the ideal." Coleridge defines it as "The best words in the best order."

Bryant fully answers both requirements.

Bryant's exquisite choice of words, both in sound and signification, is a continual delight. We hear the "hissing bolt of scorn" and

> "The sound of dropping nuts is heard,
> Though all the trees are still,"

not falling nuts, but dropping.

In "Waiting by the Gate," how ponderous the tread in one line and how light in the succeeding:—

> "Steps of earth's great and mighty between those pillars gray,
> And prints of little feet mark the dust along the way."

When he speaks of the "still lapse of ages" the words hold you; you can hardly misread them if you would. And mark how smoothly "the long train of ages glides away" in an infinite perspective!

It is this clearness and musical fitness that make Bryant's lines so easy to read. Even his hymns protect themselves, though of all bad reading, hymn reading is usually the worst. Many a hymn writer might well make the dying request of the old militia captain, "Don't let the awkward squad fire over my grave."

Bryant gives us pictures rather than description. He does not weary with details like the old poets, nor with catalogues like Walt Whitman. He is almost microscopic in accuracy, but there is no dissection. He sees the veins and cilia and serratures of the leaf, but he does not anatomize it. His style is so simple and clear as to seem inevitable.

> "Heaped in the hollows of the grove
> The autumn leaves lie dead;
> They rustle to the eddying gust
> And to the rabbit's tread."

How obvious! How easy! How else could it have been written? It is the artlessness of perfect art. His words are the common ones of the common people, yet with what grace and dignity they move in the presence of Johnsonian royalty. There is never a crutch or a clubfoot in the whole procession.

Bryant's personification of wind and stream and mountain we accept instantly and as a matter of course. Probably there is some contemplative boy here to-day who makes a confidant and playfellow of old Westfield river. I know there was one such, something more than sixty years ago, to whom the delightful little river was as distinct a personality as "Deacon Briggs," or the gigantic colored brother, "Old Brister." That boy would have blushed scarlet to have it known that he actually asked the whole stream how he could go laughing over his cobblestones rapids, when he had to traverse at night the deep gloom of Dug-Way and Deep-Hole where a man had been drowned. But long afterward, when he saw by chance in a magazine Bryant's "Night Journey of a River," he felt justified and almost glorified, for the great poet, too, talked to the stream :—

> "O River! darkling river! what a voice
> Is that thou utterest while all is still—
> The ancient voice, that, centuries ago,
> Sounded between thy hills, while Rome was yet,
> A weedy solitude by Tiber's stream."

Late one afternoon in December, 1815, Bryant walked over to yonder hamlet of Plainfield, with the design of opening a law office there. That was the walk that led to the writing of what many hold is his best poem, "To a Waterfowl." As he climbed the hill into the little town he turned around, as one so naturally does in climbing a long hill, and looked back over the darkening landscape, feeling quite forlorn and desolate over his business prospects. Mr. Godwin, in his magnificent biography of the poet, in describing the incident, says: "The sun had already set, leaving behind it one of those brilliant seas of chrysolite and opal which often flood the New England skies; and while he was looking upon the rosy splen-

dor, with rapt admiration, a solitary bird made wing along the illuminated horizon. He watched the lone wanderer until it was lost in the distance, asking himself whence it had come and to what far home it was flying. When he went to the house where he was to stop for the night, his mind was still full of what he had seen and felt and he wrote those lines, as imperishable as our language, 'To a Waterfowl.'" You all know the closing stanza:—

> "He who from zone to zone
> Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight,
> In the long way that I must tread alone,
> Will lead my steps aright."

What is the secret of power in lines like this little quatrain?

When the great violinist Wieniawski played in the largest hall in America it was observed that the slenderest spider thread of tone from his violin was heard distinctly in every part of the great room, distance seeming to have little effect upon it. It was the quality, the purity of tone that gave it such a reach. It is quality, fidelity to truth and nature that will make Bryant's lines live while elaborate faiths dissolve and empires pass away. Who shall say how many steep declivities in life this little quatrain has helped to climb, or how often at the parting of the ways, or in hours of doubt and distress it has come, bringing comfort and courage with its sublime trust? Victor Hugo was right when he said, "Every bird that flies carries the thread of the infinite in his claw." When this poem was written our hymn books were dark with hymns that Giant Despair himself might have written. Bryant has not a line of despair. Not one! His God may not be as Socrates said his was, "a God of glee," but he is a God of serene and eternal joy.

The loneliness of Plainfield was soon exchanged for the excellent society and wider opportunities of Great Barrington where he laid the foundation of a happy home by his happy marriage, and where he proved his ability to succeed in the profession of the law; but through his own aspirations, and the suggestions of the appreciative and learned Sedgwicks and others, he entered a more congenial field in the metropolis. His fame was already secure. Great men

live two lives, one in their own generation and another in the ages following.

Immensely long was Bryant's life as literatus and poet, and the second life will stretch away to a proportionate duration. Bryant lived two lives in his own day and generation and was pre-eminent in each—poet and editor.

Bryant's fame rests mainly on his verses, but his chief merit is that he was a great and constant moral force. The angels of Conduct, Toil and Thought ever stood by his door, ready to accompany him whithersoever he went. In the earlier part of his editorial career the moral apathy of the country was profound and almost hopeless. Of the great powers of society, state, church, court and commerce, it would be hard to say which was the most deaf to the voice of conscience, or the most willingly blind to the demands of human brotherhood. Bryant did not go into a newspaper for the express purpose of reviving this paralyzed conscience of the people, but primarily to get a livelihood. But his hand being to the plow, his sense of justice would not permit him to look back. In the midst of the free and easy dickering with conscience in national affairs he stood as firm as his native hills for the sacredness of man's duty to man. He made the *Evening Post* not only a literary authority, but the high-water mark of public and political morality. For two generations he labored, a man among men, for the strengthening of that moral sentiment and that public and private virtue which lie at the basis of all politics and all religion that are worth anything to mankind. The influences of half a century of such labor must be vast and far-reaching, though intangible and untraceable as that of the sunlight, whose results are seen in ruddy fruits and grateful leafage on every hand.

"Wise men," said a Greek philosopher, "argue questions and fools decide them." But in that same Athens, though the mob was as capricious as a Chicago mob of to-day, the greatest happiness of that age was attained, and its philosophy and art still illuminate all the new highways of civilization. So men like Bryant and Emerson and Whittier, knowing wherein their power lay, were right in

going steadily on with that John the Baptist work which prepared the way for "the glory of the coming of the Lord." I cannot forbear to recall the shout of joy with which young Buffalo platform Free-Soilers in 1848 saw Bryant unfurl, in the staid and able *Evening Post*, the banner of Free Soil, Free Speech and Free Men; to which he added Free Trade on his own account. In the center and heart of Baal worship he stood for that "Higher Law" whose home, as old Richard Hooker said, "is in the bosom of God, and whose voice is the harmony of the universe." And when, in 1865, it at last became almost safe for colleges to listen to conscience, for statesmen to be wise, for commerce to be honest, for the church to be Christian, and for the courts to be just, none rejoiced with a profounder joy than this modest, self-possessed poet-editor, for none had played a nobler part in the mighty struggle.

> "Blest and thrice blest the Roman
> Who sees Rome's brightest day,"

and this our Cato saw.

Part of the oath required of every Egyptian soul, in the judgment hall of Osiris, before admission to Heaven, was one that could have been taken by Bryant every morning of his career: "I have never defiled my conscience from fear or favor to my superiors." Few lives have been so well rounded and complete. No window in this Aladdin palace was left unfinished, but a magic lamp of genius long shone clear from every one. His first word was the absolute truth of nature, and his last was for human freedom. All the shores of Time are piled high with the debris of faiths, and customs, and empires; the very next gale that goes careering over mankind may add our own to the vast and melancholy accumulation; but what storm, what revolution can bring disaster to a character so gloriously in line with eternal rectitude? "It is in no more danger than a star in the jaws of a cloud." Since such a man has lived and wrought, civic virtue and honesty in politics are no longer an impracticable dream. With a fuller measure of success in life than his great heart could have dreamed, he passed away, breathing the grateful fragrance of universal honor and esteem.

Beautiful was this life of eighty-four years in the home, in the political forum, and in the wide fields of literature.

Beautiful was this life in these lonely pastures and silent woods ; more beautiful when, laying his harp aside, he went down into the thickest of the struggle for conscience and duty and human rights.

Beautiful upon these mountains was the coming of our beloved poet, chanting the primal, eldest message of Nature and of Time.

Beautiful was his going, at last, with the eloquent eulogium of a fellow worker in the cause of human freedom upon his aged lips.

Oh, serene and illustrious spirit ! Brood forever over these thy native hills, and over all our land, the guardian genius of literature and liberty, of poetry and art, and all that is noble and pure and true.

The Memorial address was followed by the singing of Bryant's hymn, commencing " O, deem not they are blest alone," arranged as a duet, by Julie A. Shaw and Henrietta S. Nahmer, after which Mr. John H. Bryant recited in clear, vibrant tones " The Monody," a part of which poem he had written soon after his brother's death. The touching pathos of this tribute, given to the dead brother, by the one who still lived, will never be forgotten by those who heard it.

# A MONODY.

My heart to-day is far away;
  I seem to tread my native hills;
I see the flocks and mossy rocks;
  I hear the gush of mountain rills.

There with me walks and kindly talks
  The dear, dear friend of all my years,
We laid him low not long ago,
  At Roslyn-side with sobs and tears.

But though I know that this is so
  I will not have it so to-day;
The illusion still, by force of will
  Shall give my wayward fancy play.

With joy we roam around the home
  Where in our childhood days we played;
We tread the mead, with verdure spread,
  And seek the wood-paths' grateful shade.

We climb the steep, where fresh winds sweep,
  Where oft before our feet have trod,
And look far forth, east, south, and north
  "Upon the glorious works of God."

We tread again the rocky glen,
  Where foaming waters dash along;
And sit alone on mossy stone
  Charmed by the thrasher's twilight song.

Anon we stray, far, far away
  The club-moss crumbling 'neath our tread,
Seeking the spot, by most forgot,
  Where sleep the generations dead.

And now we come into the home,
  The dear old home our childhood knew,
And round the board with plenty stored
  We gather as we used to do.

With reverence now, I see him bow
  That head with many honors crowned;
All white his locks are as the flocks
  That feed upon the hills around.

John Howard Bryant.

Again we meet in converse sweet
  Around the blazing cottage hearth,
And while away the closing day
  With quiet talk and tales of mirth.

The spell is broke. Oh, cruel stroke!
  The illusive vision will not stay,
My fond, sweet dream was fancy's gleam
  Which stubborn fact has chased away.

I am alone; my friend is gone,
  He'll seek no more that lovely scene;
His feet no more shall wander o'er
  These wooded hills and pastures green.

No more he'll look upon the brook
  Whose banks his infant feet had pressed,
The little rill, whose waters still
  Come dancing from the rosy west.

Nor will he climb at autumn time
  Those hills the glorious sight to view,
When in their best the woods are dressed—
  The same his raptured boyhood knew.

The hermit thrush at twilight hush
  He'll hear no more with deep delight;
No blossoms gay beside the way
  Attract his quick and eager sight.

The lulling sound from pines around
  No more shall soothe his noon-day rest,
Nor trailing cloud with misty shroud
  For him the morning hills invest.

That voice so sweet that late did greet
  My ear each passing summer-tide
Is silent now; that reverend brow
  Rests in the grave at Roslyn-side.

His was a life of toil and strife
  Against the wrong and for the good;
Through weary years of hopes and fears
  For freedom, truth and right he stood.

At length a gleam of broad esteem
  On his declining years was cast,
And a bright crown of high renown
  Enwreathed his hoary head at last.

His love of song so deep and strong
  In boyhood, faded not in age;
At life's last hour, with noontide power,
  His genius lit the printed page.

His sun has set; its twilight yet
  Flushes the chambers of the sky;
A softer flame of spreading fame,
  A glory that shall never die.

The closing exercise of the morning was the singing by E. Lester Brown, son of the orator of the day, of Mrs. Julia Ward Howe's grand lyric, "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," the refrain of "Glory Hallelujah" being taken by the chorus. When the gifted authoress rose at the spontaneous greeting from the audience, the scene was thrilling and inspiring, as with grace she bowed her whitened head to the cheers of this appreciative country-side gathering.

# AFTERNOON EXERCISES.

These commenced with a march, "Old Homestead," by the orchestra, and the singing of "A Forest Retreat" by the local chorus, after which the following letters were read by the secretary:—

### Letter from O. W. Holmes.

Beverly Farms, Mass., August 13, 1894.

It would have given me great pleasure to attend the celebration of Bryant's hundredth birthday at Cummington, but the effects of a recent illness render it imprudent for me to undertake the journey. Thirty years ago I had the privilege of being present at a great meeting held in New York, to greet Mr. Bryant on his seventieth birthday. He was the oldest of that group of poets whose names were already familiar to all American readers. If such an office had existed he would have been the Dean of the Guild of our native poets. Emerson, Longfellow, Whittier and Lowell were all then living and in full possession of their varied powers. As I recall him on that occasion he seemed as one belonging to the past. His venerable aspect was growing more and more like the ideal of the bard as Gray has pictured him. I need not quote the lines which recur to all who remember Bryant in his later years. Yet though his life was handed over to us from a bygone century, though he looked to the younger crowd around him as if he had strayed from another world into that of to-day, no man was more keenly alive to the thoughts and doings of his time than William Cullen Bryant. I could have wished to contribute on this occasion to the memory of the poet in the form of verse, but I must be permitted to borrow the words of one of the *guests at the banquet in New York which express what I would say better than any I should be likely to extort from the languors of convalescence.

*Himself.

How shall we praise the verse whose music flows
With solemn cadence and majestic close,
Pure as the dew that filters through the rose?

How shall we thank him that in evil days
He faltered never, nor for blame nor praise,
Nor hire, nor party, shamed his earlier lays?

But as his boyhood was of manliest hue
So to his youth his manly years were true,
All dyed in royal purple, through and through.

At the meeting of his seventieth birthday Bryant was in a vigorous condition of mind and body. He might, perhaps, have lived into his ninth or tenth decade had he not been in dangerously good health. But trusting to his strong constitution he would not spare himself. He forgot the limitations of threescore and twenty, and Nature reminded him of them in a fatal message.

As a patriot his name belongs with those of the "Sons of Liberty" of the century in which he was born. As a man of letters he deserves an honorable place among those of the scholars of his time. As a poet he has shaped his own monument.

Marbles forget their message to mankind,
In his own verse the poet lives enshrined.

A breath of noble verse outlives all that can be carved in stone or cast in bronze. In his poems inspired by Nature, Bryant has identified himself with perennial life. In singing of Death he has won the prize of Immortality.

O. W. Holmes.

Letter from ex-Senator Dawes.

Pittsfield, August 10, 1894.

I sincerely regret that I have not been able to so arrange previous engagements as to make it possible for me to participate in the commemorative exercises of the sixteenth in my native town. I am very glad that this generation of its inhabitants cherish the memory and honor the name of its most illustrious son. The town does itself great honor in bearing testimony to the personal worth and the genius of the most distinguished of its children. It thus

testifies to the world its own appreciation of those rare gifts with which Mr. Bryant was endowed and casts out from its borders the pretense that a prophet is without honor in his own country.

It is the birthright of us all to love and honor him who has done so much to keep the name of our good old town a living memory as long as the rivulet shall run to the river and the hills among which he was born shall stand about his birthplace.

May the occasion be most enjoyable to you and all those who with you pay fitting tribute to the rare and lovable character we have all held in such high regard.

Henry L. Dawes.

There was one person seated upon the platform by the side of the poet's daughter, who had been the friend of Bryant for many years, and also his associate upon the *Evening Post*, with which his name is inseparably connected, who had the further claim to distinction of having represented our country at the court of France under Abraham Lincoln—the Hon. John Bigelow. He had come from the Constitutional Convention of the State of New York, then in session at Albany, and this circumstance led to the humorous suggestions of many of the speakers.

## ADDRESS OF HON. JOHN BIGELOW.

When I accepted the invitation to assist at this pious festival it was with the understanding, as I thought, that I was to be ministered unto, not to minister; to hear rather than be heard; nor was it without some scruples that I left Albany yesterday, as I was compelled to do in order to get here this morning, for the final vote in the Constitutional Convention of my state, on the amendment intended to extend the elective franchise to the gentler sex, was to be taken last evening, and it grieved me to lose the only opportunity I have ever had or expect to have of casting my vote for such extension. However, I overcame my scruples by pairing with an adversary of suffrage extension, that I might not seem to neglect any and especially such an appropriate occasion for doing homage to the memory of him in whose honor we are gathered together here to-day.

The mind-reading speakers who have already addressed you have anticipated much of what I would have wished to say, fortunately for you as they have said it better than I should have done, and I shall therefore limit the few remarks with which I shall detain you to matters more or less exclusively within the range of my personal experience.

It was my good fortune to be associated professionally with Mr. Bryant for several years, and to come into closer relations with his opulent intellect and symmetrical character than could have been enjoyed by many of those whom I have the privilege of addressing. I have always regarded his invitation to join him in the management of the *Evening Post*, and to share with him its responsibilities, as the greatest honor I have ever received. It gave me a value in my own eyes which of itself constituted a perpetual impulse to justify it.

The purity of his life, the lofty standard which he followed, his inexorable truthfulness, directness and uprightness which have

been necessarily the most prominent theme of all the discourses you have heard to-day; his varied literary accomplishments unequaled in this country at least, by any who have ornamented the profession, to which he devoted the most of his adult life, and finally his verse, the full value of which is far yet from being duly appreciated, exerted upon me a peculiar influence, more extensive and enduring than I have been conscious of experiencing from my associations with any other man in my life.

Everything he did, said or wrote was in some way an example, an impulse, or a criticism. It always bore a certain stamp of superiority which arrested attention and commanded respect. What is still a surprise to me and to many may seem incredible, I felt that influence for long years after we were separated to such a degree that I rarely found myself perplexed in regard to the line of duty or propriety or good taste, without asking myself, " What would Bryant have done under those circumstances?" and I may say that, unlike the ancient oracles, he never gave me an equivocal or doubtful answer. If I never profited as much as I ought and should have done by such an example, it is, nevertheless, an illustration of the power and importance of a good example, which has seemed worthy of being referred to here, for it is calculated to give us all a juster sense of our responsibilities for the example we give one to another, responsibilities which we all undervalue.

There was another web woven into the woof of Mr. Bryant's life to which no allusion has yet been made here to-day, which must be carefully reckoned with in any estimate of his life and character. Mrs. Bryant, embalmed in his early verse as " Fairest of the Rural Maids," was his Egeria. She was his confidant, counselor and partner, in all his hopes and anxieties, in prosperity and adversity. He never considered his verses fit to meet the public eye until they had received her approval, for he early discovered that he had no other friend whose judgment of his verse was so sure to be ratified by the public. What Marcenas was to Horace, she less questionably was to Mr. Bryant, the half of his life. Nothing he ever wrote is more touching than the lines written during her illness at

Naples in 1860, when he was despairing of her recovery, and brooding over the dread prospect of their earthly separation. These verses in his published writings are accompanied by no explanation of the pathetic circumstances under which they were written and which may not have been known to many of you. I think I cannot more appropriately conclude these unpremeditated remarks than by reading those lines with which, while commemorating Bryant, we may also in his majestic verse commemorate the beloved wife of the poet and the mother of his children.

Mr. Bigelow then read from Bryant's Poems

### The Cloud on the Way.

See, before us, in our journey, broods a mist upon the ground;
Thither leads the path we walk in, blending with that gloomy bound;
Never eye hath pierced its shadows to the mystery they screen;
Those who once have passed within it never more on earth are seen.
Now it seems to stoop beside us, now at seeming distance lowers,
Leaving banks that tempt us onward bright with summer-green and flowers,
Yet it blots the way forever; there our journey ends at last;
Into that dark cloud we enter, and are gathered to the past.
Thou who, in this flinty pathway, leading through a stranger-land,
Passest down the rocky valley, walking with me hand in hand,
Which of us shall be the soonest folded to that dim unknown?
Which shall leave the other walking in this flinty path alone?
Even now I see thee shudder, and thy cheek is white with fear,
And thou clingest to my side as comes that darkness sweeping near.
"Here" thou say'st "the path is rugged, sown with thorns that wound the feet;
But the sheltered glens are lovely, and the rivulet's song is sweet;
Roses breathe from tangled thickets; lilies bend from ledges brown;
Pleasantly between the pelting showers the sunshine gushes down;
Dear are those who walk beside us, they whose looks and voices make
All this rugged region cheerful, till I love it for their sake.
Far be yet the hour that takes me where that chilly shadow lies,
From the things I know and love, and from the sight of loving eyes."
So thou murmurest, fearful one; but see, we tread a rougher way;
Fainter glow the gleams of sunshine that upon the dark rocks play;
Rude winds strew the faded flowers upon the crags o'er which we pass;
Banks of verdure, when we reach them, hiss with tufts of withered grass,
One by one we miss the voices which we loved so well to hear,
One by one the kindly faces in that shadow disappear,
Yet upon the mist before us fix thine eyes with closer view;

See, beneath its sullen skirts the rosy morning glimmers through ;
One whose feet the thorns have wounded passed that barrier and came back
With a glory on His footsteps lighting yet the dreary track.
Boldly enter where He entered ; all that seems but darkness here,
When thou once hast passed beyond it, haply shall be crystal-clear;
Viewed from that serener realm, the walks of human life may lie,
Like the page of some familiar volume, open to thine eye;
Haply, from the o'erhanging shadow, thou may'st stretch an unseen hand,
To support the wavering steps that print with blood the rugged land.
Haply, leaning o'er the pilgrim, all unweeting thou art near,
Thou may'st whisper words of warning or of comfort in his ear,
Till, beyond the border where that brooding mystery bars the sight,
Those whom thou hast fondly cherished stand with thee in peace and light.

Mr. Godwin introduced Mrs. Howe as "one of the leading women in the great movement favoring woman suffrage," a position which she considers of equal honor with her rank as authoress of the " Battle Hymn."

# POEM BY MRS. HOWE.

The age its latest decade shows,
The wondrous autumn near its close,
Revealing in its fateful span,
Unwonted ways of good to man.

Imprisoned vapor speeds its course,
Flies, quick with life th' electric force,
Nature's dæmonic mysteries
Are angels now that win and please.

But dearer far to human ken,
The record of illustrious men,
The gifts conveyed in measures wrought
Of noble purpose and high thought.

Above the wild industrial din,
The race an hundred goals to win,
The gathered wealth, the rifled mine,
Still sounds the poet's song divine.

The skill that marshals myriad hands,
For manhood's task in many lands,
Attunes her anvil by the lyre,
And forges with Promethean fire.

Oh master of imperial lays,
Crowned in the fullness of thy days,
One heart that owns thy gracious spell
Thy reverend mien remembers well.

*For mine it was, ere fell the snow
Upon this head of long ago,
My modest wreath to intertwine
With richer offerings at thy shrine.

---

*At the festival given by the Century Club in commemoration of the seventieth birth-day of Bryant.

A guest upon that day of days,
How leapt my heart to hymn thy praise!
Yea, from that hour my spirit wore
A high content unknown before.

The past engulfs these echoes fond;
Thou and thy mates have passed beyond,
And that fair festival appears
Dim through the vista of long years.

But love still keeps his watch below,
When fades from sight the sunset glow,
And at the challenge of thy name
Stirs in each heart the loyal flame.

Still battling on the field of life,
We break from the unequal strife,
From task or pastime hasten all
As at a vanished leader's call.

Within the shadow of thy tent
We read again thy testament,
Review the treasure which thy art
Bequeathed t' enrich thy country's heart.

No gift whose precious bloom can fade,
No holocaust on false shrine laid,
A legacy of good untold,
August as oracles of old,
The winged words that cannot die,
The world-transcending prophecy.

Plainfield, not only the sister of Cummington, but its daughter as well, was honored in the person of the next speaker, Charles Dudley Warner, the humorous essayist and careful portrayer of modern social life.

## ADDRESS OF CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER.

This seems to be a very grand and promiscuous picnic. When I came to the edge of it, I pushed through to find the storm center, and when I saw the leonine head of Mr. Godwin, I knew the center of the intellectual radiance. But in this center it is not easy to address the encircling audience. The only thing that could adequately address this surrounding crowd is a revolving flash-light.

This is a significant and important meeting. It is a great thing for a town like this to keep in mind the memory of its great men, and to get together on one pretext or another as often as possible for the encouragement of its just town pride and the interchange of social feeling. I like to see the town spirit cultivated, and there is nothing else so stimulating for it as the inspiring memory of its great men. To the towns about here, I recommend that they go back and get as soon as possible a Bryant to celebrate. As I was born in the next town, Plainfield, and Dr. Bryant, the poet's father was my father's physician ('though I am happy to say not his last), and our apple orchard is in sight of the Bryant homestead, I feel that I have some right to pay a tribute to the man whose birth has conferred distinction on all this region. If Cummington had never done anything else than produce William Cullen Bryant, she would be immortal. We see here what is most valuable in the life of any town, state or nation. History does not much regard fertile soil, or material wealth, but the admirable men and women that the state produces. They are the glory of a state. But it is not merely a matter of reputation. The influence of such a man as Bryant, of such a high character, and such a true poet, is great with his contemporaries, and with their descendants. Who can say what moral influence, what a refining and elevating force the poetry of Bryant has been in this region alone?

I knew "Thanatopsis" by heart when I was a very small boy, and

as I went about repeating it, it used to interpret for me Bryant's feeling for nature, the nature that I saw, and the noble pathos of life. It seemed to be a secret which I shared with the poet. I remember well how shamefaced I was once when a cousin of mine exposed me. Unbeknown to me he had stood near me one evening, when I was milking one of the cows, and heard me repeat "Thanatopsis." It must be sufficiently ludicrous, the spectacle of a barefooted scrap of a boy—a boy, but not more than nine years younger than the other boy when he wrote the poem—seated on a milking stool and declaiming those immortal lines to the cow. I do not know how he managed to accommodate the stately rhythm of that blank verse to the intermittent sounding streams in the pail. Very likely he did not, and that was one of the reasons why he was accused of drying up the cows he milked. I wondered then, and I wonder now, where "Thanatopsis" came from. How did it come into the mind of a boy in these remote hills, away from the suggestions of the great world? Did the hills teach him, and the forests and the brooks and the clouds? Was it industry and application that made this poem? I think, my friends, that we shall have to fall back on that mysterious something, the possibly supernatural suggestion that we call genius. Ah, it was genius that has brought this great multitude here to-day. You might have had all the dictionary writers and learned men, and some of the plodding fellows who speak to you, and you would never have had such a gathering as this.

Now I am going to suggest that we mark this day, by giving this hill upon which we meet, which runs yonder to a summit, that was a favorite place of contemplation with our poet, a name that shall express something of the permanent reputation he has left. Mr. Bigelow has made himself very popular with this audience by saying that if he had remained at his post in the Constitutional Convention of New York, to-night he might have voted for woman suffrage. That is, if he had been there he would have voted to give you suffrage at some time in the future.

I am not going to show my hand by saying whether he is

deservedly popular with you for this, but I am going to give you a chance to vote right now, without being registered. To vote on this resolution. *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the town of Cummington, and of this county, that the hill on which we stand shall hereafter be known to the world and the map-makers as "Mount Bryant." The vote seems to be unanimous. Those opposed are probably not in favor of woman suffrage and I won't take their vote.

One of the most interesting features of the day was the presence of John W. Hutchinson, sole survivor of the once famous Hutchinson band of singers. With his long white locks brushed straight back from his brow, his long beard, and keen, piercing eyes, and attire of a bygone fashion, his was a marked presence. With kindling fervor, he gave a few reminiscences of the days when a little band of Abolitionists made the old Baptist church in Cummington the headquarters of a movement, which, though feeble then, soon became of significant importance. He recalled the presence at this country outpost, of those honored leaders in the cause—Wendell Philips, William Lloyd Garrison, Lucy Stone, Stephen Foster, Parker Pillsbury and others, and mentioned the fact that Cummington was one of the stations on that Underground Railroad, over which sped many a despairing fugitive to liberty and light. The Baptist church, historic shrine and rendezvous of the faithful ones of anti-slavery days, was burned two weeks before this hundredth anniversary, to the keen regret and sorrow of the people of Cummington.

The following music was sung by John W. Hutchinson and E. Lester Brown :—

## THE OLD FRIENDS ARE THE TRUEST.

Oh, the old friends are the truest,
After all, after all;
Though the face be not the newest
After all, after all;
When the fever heat is highest
Or the chilling tide is nighest,
Over all there comes a reaching
Of a friendship, whose sweet teaching
Brings us joy and peace and rest,
For the weary soul the best
After all, after all.

What are all the stings of malice
After all, after all?
There are joys deep in life's chalice
After all, after all.
Should the shadows then pursue us
And the sunbeams ne'er come o'er us?
As our feet pass by the daisies
Shall our souls ne'er count His praises?
Oh, there is some joy, some rest
For the weary soul the best
After all, after all.

Far better than the old or newest,
After all, after all,
Is that loving friend the truest
After all, after all.
Over calms and storms He sees us
And from danger, too, He frees us,
And amid our faithless serving
Keeps a watchfulness unswerving.
Heaven shows us perfect rest;
There our weary souls are blest
After all, after all.

Mr. Godwin prefaced the reading of the next poem by remarking upon the high privilege granted to the audience to listen to the words of the sage, whose utterances at his advanced age would necessarily be but few more.

## AT EIGHTY-SEVEN.

JOHN H. BRYANT.

Alone, alone, why wait I here,
 When all most loved have passed away;
Parents, and wife and children dear,
 Brothers and sisters, where are they?

Gone to the boundless silent past—
 And will that past return again,
Restore its conquests wide and vast,
 Or is this yearning hope in vain?

I know not, and I cannot know,
 I only know a mighty wave,
Resistless in its onward flow,
 Sweeps all things living to the grave.

No voice from that reluctant sphere,
 Or whisper of the stilly night
E'er falls upon my waiting ear,
 Nor faintest shadow meets my sight.

Still, hope eternal looks away
 Beyond the darkness of the tomb,
Where friends departed meet or stray
 Through bowers of light and joy and bloom.

Though thus bereft, life still is sweet;
 All nature doth her promise fill;
The wild flowers blossom at my feet;
 These glorious heavens are round me still.

The changing seasons come and go,
 Full harvests ripen on the plain,
The autumn woods resume their glow,
 And winter snows return again.

Alone, I said; oh, not alone,
 For loving friends still wait around,
Sweet voices yet of silvery tone
 Greet my dull ear with grateful sound.

Goodness and mercy day by day,
  From birth unto the present hour
Have followed me, or led the way—
  The guidance of Almighty Power.

And now, amid the failing light,
  With faltering steps I journey on,
Waiting the coming of the night,
  When earthly light and life are gone.

And shall there rise a brighter day
  Beyond this scene ot calm and strife,
Where iove and peace shall rule for aye,
  And goodness be the rule of life?

I lean on the Almighty arm
  The Good, the Merciful and Just,
His love and care all fears disarm;
  On His unchanging law I rest.

On introducing Prof. Charles Eliot Norton, Mr. Godwin made graceful allusion to the fact that both George William Curtis and James Russell Lowell, the most eminent of America's literary men in certain lines, had chosen Prof. Norton as the most fitting literary executor of their works. After a few introductory remarks Mr. Norton said:—

A poet can render to his people no greater service than to make their land dearer to them. This is what Scott did for Scotland, Burns for Ayrshire, Wordsworth for Cumberland, Westmoreland and Lancaster, and this is what Bryant has done for Western Massachusetts. The nature which he knew and loved and by which he was inspired was that of the rivers, the hills, and the forests of Berkshire and Hampshire counties; the character manifest in his poetry and its dominating sentiment are the character and sentiment which he shared with the people of this region, and which found expression in their lives. They were a simple, grave, sedate race, deeply impressed with the seriousness of life, on which

they had but a narrow outlook, full of piety, nurtured on dogma, and possessed of strong moral convictions. There were little variety of experience and little play of feeling in their lives, no intensity of heroic passion, no splendid lifts of the imagination; no light of romance in their monotonous days. There was little grace in them, either of body or mind, but their bodies were vigorous, and their minds intelligent. It was a well-to-do, but not a light-hearted community; a community of domestic virtues, of general kindliness, of reserved sympathies, but capable of sacrifices and of occasional shy displays of tenderness; its heart was essentially sound. Of this people, dwelling in this wholesome, beautiful and rugged country, Bryant is the poet. He uttered for them what they had within themselves but were incapable of expressing, and he invested this region with the charm of poetic associations which will make its pleasant landscape dearer forever to those whose opening eyes shall first rest upon it. Happy the poet who has this power! Happy the poet who becomes thus part of the patriotic pride of his own people! Happy he who has indissolubly connected the thought of himself with a scene, or with some natural object, with a bird or a flower. The harebell nods with the rhythm of the verse of Scott, the daffodil dances to the tune of Wordsworth's rhyme, the lark sings Shakespeare's "Hark! Hark!" at heaven's gate, the nightingale never ceases to lament her poet untimely dead in Keats, each petal of the rose is inscribed with a poet's name, the mountain daisy bears the message of Burns, the gold of the dandelion is the brighter for Lowell's verse, but the fringed gentian blooms for Bryant, and so long as a wild duck shall cross in its flight the crimson sky of evening, so long will Bryant's memory float heavenward with it.

The poet-preacher who interprets for us with keen and loving vision, the meaning of the forces of the universe, gave the following address:—

## ADDRESS BY REV. JOHN WHITE CHADWICK.

I am reminded, Mr. President, of the man who, when an awful silence fell upon a prayer meeting in Western Pennsylvania, got up and said that as none of the brethren seemed to have anything to say, he would make a few remarks upon the tariff. The brethren here have all had enough to say, and none of them too much, but if they had made a few remarks upon the tariff I should have been better pleased. For we must all agree that to speak of Bryant adequately, and not say a good deal about the tariff, is an impossible thing. Whatever else he was in the variety of his powers and gifts, he was eminently a tariff reformer, and if any one had called him a free-trader he would have been thankful for the praise. There were giants in those days. Horace Greeley was one, and William Cullen Bryant was another, and when they met in battle it was like two thunderclouds that burst in heaven, so terrible was the noise of conflict, and so refreshing the outpouring of their mutual recriminations. In this company there are many men of many minds about the tariff, but we are all of one mind I trust about this, that it is good for a man to have principles, one way or the other, and to stand by them through thick and thin, and this Bryant had and did, and hence in good part the honor that we give him on this happy day, and if he could return to us for a little while, rather than have him write another poem, I would have him write another editorial for the *Evening Post*, characterizing in fit terms those Gorman-dizers of the Senate, who have swallowed their principles and sold their party for a mess of sugar. That he would be equal to the occasion I have not the slightest doubt.

I have read of a minister in this section, or some other, who received a call to another parish, involving an increase of salary. He said he would pray for light, and after a few days one of the

neighbors overhauled his son and asked him "if the old man had made up his mind," and the boy made answer, "He is still praying for light, *but he has packed his trunks.*" Yesterday I went to the Ashfield dinner, praying for light. To-day when I set out for Cummington, I packed my trunk and here it is (producing a manuscript), for if I am to speak of Bryant as a poet, I would speak no hasty, unconsidered word. But what can I say of him that has not been said already? He was so simple here that we must all say the same things about him, or some of us say what is not true. It is a poor business trying to rank our poets first, second, third and so on. When a few years ago our English friends were trying to do this for us, and were putting Poe in the first place, my dear friend, Dr. Hedge, a judge in such high things, wrote to me: "'Thanatopsis,' our greatest poem, Emerson our greatest poet, Poe nowhere." But we need them all, as in the perfect orchestra we need the various instruments of wood, and brass, and silver, Poe's tinkling triangle among the rest. Bryant was no more an American Wordsworth than Cooper was an American Scott. He was an American Bryant, with as little of foreign admixture as Whittier or Emerson. If we endeavor to make out his quality we shall find that in his poetry as in his politics, the first thing was an absolute sincerity. What he said of birds and flowers, of rocks and streams, was not something that he had read in books, but something that he had seen with his own eyes, and felt with his own beating heart. Moreover, it was given him to tell what he had seen and felt, shaping his words upon the object or experience as the cloud shapes itself upon the mountain's top. Here was his second note—a curious felicity, the magic phrase, that which we go to Milton for in "Paradise Lost," wading to find it through the infinite sand of his theology, and when we find it, it is always Paradise found. In the next place he was a master of poetic form, albeit he made occasional concessions to the popular jog-trot measures of the time. He was no experimenter in metres, but within the narrow range to which he deliberately confined himself, he beat out a very noble music, a music, often, of deep organ

tones. If we are as sincere in our criticism as he was in his work, I think we shall agree that his best things, the things which greatly please us and affect us, are but few. "Thanatopsis," "The Forest Hymn," the "Inscription for the Entrance to a Wood," "The Water Fowl," "June," "The Death of the Flowers," "The Rivulet"—not many more than these, but these of such pure perfection that we are entirely happy and content.

> "Whose part in all the pomp that fills
> The circuit of the summer hills,
> Is that his grave is green."

I never call to mind that magic phrase without wishing that he might have had that little part of this majestic pomp. The monument which marks his birthplace ought to mark his grave. But if he hasn't that he has a great deal more. There is no rock or stream, no tree or flower in all this country-side in which he has not a part. To look on these things is to think of him, their friend and lover, who made them so much more for us by his imperishable song.

He was an American Bryant and he was emphatically a New England Bryant.

Dante did not embody the mediæval theology in his "Divina Commedia" more perfectly than Bryant embodied in his "Thanatopsis" the New England engagement with death "Memento Mori!" His poem was a glorious expansion of that injunction which for two centuries had been the staple of New England sermons, hymns and prayers. But it was more than an expansion. It was a transfiguration. It dwelt upon "the solemn decorations, all of the great tomb of man" with such a proud insistence that men enamored of their glorious beauty forgot the ruinous fatality about which it wound its various circumstance.

Enjoined to think of death, they found themselves thinking of life, that great life of nature which does not decorate more solemnly and tenderly the great tomb of man, than it does his happy cradle and his spacious home. He sang the fleetingness of our humanity

and the stability of nature's course and frame. And lo! the trees he loved hasten to their decay, and the hills they clothed with beauty are more perishable than the poems they inspired in his New England mind and heart.

George W. Cable's place upon the programme was filled by an old-time song, "The Old Granite State," which was sung by John W. Hutchinson.

After the singing of "The Oaks" by the chorus, President G. Stanley Hall, who in ripened experience and thoughtful methods shows the value of the sturdy independence of the New England training among our hills and farms, spoke as follows:—

## ADDRESS OF PRESIDENT G. STANLEY HALL.

If love is the greatest thing in the world, as Christianity and the great biologers are now both telling us, and if nature is the all mother, then to truly love nature must be, if not itself the *summum bonum*, at least it must involve most of the virtue and blessings of life.

I think Bryant was a true lover of nature. He said the poets fostered this taste in him, and that man is necessarily a naturalist. We talk, write and sing much of nature love, but alas most men are more strangers to her than the clergy tell us we are aliens from God, and our recent poetry of nature seems to me to be mostly the yeast of a degenerate muse.

City life removes children from nature, and a careful inventory shows that they know little of the commonest objects and phenomena. The late report of the British commission showed that science teaching had relatively declined there in recent years, as it has in many places here.

We exploit nature and use it for commercial ends, and what we thus utilize, we cease to worship. The methods of the field naturalist, and of primitive star-gazers, in the days when it was true that "the undevout astronomer is mad" have been superseded by complex in-door laboratory methods. We approach nature through the mazes of microscopic technique. Probably never since the world stood have so small a proportion of the human race felt the power of nature. The beginning of better things is at hand. Gilbert White of Selborne, Audubon, Thoreau Richard Jeffries, and Hamilton Gibson, are being read, and the devoted little band of worshipers at Biologas' shrine have now great reason to hope again, although modern men and women have a long road to travel and very much yet to learn.

Let us make an effort to look at this matter from the large

Aristotelian standpoint of the "spectator of all time and all existence." If we could rise to this higher common sense we should first realize, I think, that children and savages start with a right view of nature. Most children love collections, amulets and mas cots, and are little fetich worshipers and idolaters, and they must be so as the race has been, or else science and religion alike, which spring from this common root, will be built upon the sand. Children embrace trees, give them human attributes, and have cheap emotional life if they do not know flowers. Crocus, anemone, thyme and rue, jasmine, violet, primrose, daisy, daffodil, amaranth, poppy, eglantine, heliotrope, laurel, aspen, cypress—these and scores more are the language of the emotions. They are half epiphanies, yet veils to the great mysteries which they symbolize. Frœbel saw the scheme of the kindergarten reflected to him as he gazed into the heart of a strange flower, half hypnotized by it for hours.

So of birds, the slanderous cuckoo, the boding raven, the dove and nightingale, the bluebird, that violet of sound, the lark "clinking his fairy anvil" at Heaven's gate, the chattering pie, the eagle; these, too, are parts of the language of the soul.

The very name goshawk suggests the middle ages as bulbul does the orient. So insects, pets, domestic animals, and game are parts of the furniture of every child and savage soul,—as witness totemism and animal worship, and above all the phenomena of the heavens, clouds, storm, lightning, and sun and moon, which even Socrates worshiped as gods. In all this Arian, Norse and savage mythology, of which our literature is made, roots.

Children, as abundant studies show, believe that animals, and even plants and things, feel and have suitable kinship with them. How deep this feeling is we had forgotten, but are just beginning to rediscover, as a lost link in the development of humanity. Here is the root period of science and religion, and neither can grow strong and mature unless the sentiments that underlie them are cultivated on nature.

The greater and higher anything is in the soul, the deeper its roots must strike.

More love of nature would rescue science from mean and sordid commercialism, and reveal again its heart of nature out of which "rolled the burdens of the Bibles old."

Archibald M. Howe, the grandson of Judge Samuel Howe—in whose office the poet made his first serious attempt at starting in life—and great-grandson of William Butler, who published the early childish poems of Bryant in the *Gazette*, spoke of the lawyer's phase of Bryant's life as follows:—

## ADDRESS OF ARCHIBALD M. HOWE.

The procedure of our Massachusetts courts, and the methods of purchasing law hereabouts, had been established for a comparatively short time, when William Cullen Bryant, a youth of nineteen years, was reading law with a young lawyer nine years older, who for a few years had been practising his profession in Worthington or wherever he could meet court or clients with the aid of his horse and chaise.

Soon after the adoption of the Massachusetts Constitution, followed Shays' Rebellion, which interfered with the regular course of court practice, and after that the General Court attempted to create by statute some newfangled shorthand method of procedure not unlike the attempts of the Populists in Western states, who would abolish lawyers. Joseph Hawley and John Worthington had done much to create a system out of the chaos resulting from our revolution, and the change from the government of the king to the government by the people; but in Bryant's time the bar was obliged to rely upon few precedents, and to originate much. Whatever the Massachusetts bar might have done, little was printed or accessible to the men who lived upon these beautiful hills.

Our Massachusetts cases were printed in about twelve volumes; to-day we have one hundred and sixty volumes of Supreme Court reports. A few black-letter law books were to be found here and there, and it is probable that Dane's abridgments may have been some aid. The few briefs that are preserved, show that the young lawyer of Plainfield and Great Barrington must have depended upon his power to originate arguments and to investigate authorities that were largely English, and which he could apply to questions raised in Massachusetts only by the most thorough knowledge of the fundamental principles of a constitution and of laws then being interpreted and tested for the first time.

However sweet and true were the words of Bryant, written as

are the words of poets who have the closest relations with nature and whose lives seem to be inseparable from all that makes beautiful the hills and valleys of regions like this, I think we must believe that Bryant was greatly strengthened by his life as a lawyer facing every day of his life, for at least twelve years, and until his thirtieth year, the contests and many of the trials and sufferings of his fellow countrymen.

Surely such discipline impressed upon his life more deeply than could the exercise of his poems of imagination, the true value of our new democracy, and whatever his deep sense of patriotism may have been, these early legal struggles must have impressed upon his mind the real value of the law as a means of contributing to the growth of the social order.

The embargo and early restrictive legislation were strong reasons for his consideration of all enactments that would tend to obstruct trade needlessly, and formed the basis of his later advocacy of free trade.

The few cases reported in the books which give us any information of Mr. Bryant's career as a lawyer, trying questions of law before the court of last resort, show that he did his share in thoroughly presenting all possible points to the court for its judgment; that he used the older books, but that he used his reasoning as effectively as any of his brothers at the bar.

I do not believe it is true that he left the profession because he was not sustained by the court in the case where he lost on a point of special pleading. The court treated him with great consideration, and he was entitled to a chance to maintain his suit. Such a statement about Mr. Bryant is not in accord with his nature. He left the law as a profession because he could give larger and more effective expression of his views of the laws of man, and of nature as an American editor, seated in a chair where few have ever sat in this country, the chair of a truly independent editor, with large views of his native country and his fellow countrymen, with a respect for progress through the aid of law in its highest sense, law that he promoted and interpreted by his noble life, and with

the pen in the hand of a strong man fearing no one. The *Evening Post* presented to its readers views concerning a proper use of law that are as true of to-day as of the years and days when they were written, and any man who will attempt to belittle such opinions as the opinions of a theorist or a poet will have little to comfort him as true progress towards freedom is being made. You have heard to-day the words of men and women of noble lives and of rare power, expressing to you some of the charms of Bryant's poetry; for every word we thank them. We who sit mute, or whose gifts are not such that we can express our deepest thoughts, look upward to these hills, wander through these groves of maple trees, and as our hearts beat quicker, say to ourselves that whatever strength these hills gave to the men of the earlier years of our century must not be lost in these later days. If "there were giants in those days," we will not allow American citizenship to belong to pigmies.

Bryant, the American citizen, shall be the exemplar for many thousands of those who live to read his words, not as a poet only, but as a man who has lived the life of a lawyer of high ideals, an editor of transcendent manliness, and always of a private citizen of more power than many public men of high esteem.

May I thank you, my fellow citizens of Cummington (though I do not know you personally), for allowing me to come before the good people of this neighborhood from an obscure city law office, to try to express in some measure the power for good that can come from the life of an upright lawyer. May we not hope in spite of all the temptations of the lawyer of to-day that patriotism may be again and again a stronger motive for the action of lawyers, and that the present disgraceful practices in Legislatures, which are presented too often by lawyers, may soon be overthrown, if American citizens, who as lawyers or as laymen may learn from lives like William Cullen Bryant the value of the freedom that comes from respect for law.

James H. Eckels spoke for the town of Princeton, Ill., its illustrious citizen, John H. Bryant and his brothers who left the old homestead to become the pioneers of that Western town.

Henry S. Gere, the veteran editor of the county paper, the *Hampshire Gazette*, which is the senior of Bryant by a few years, and shares with his poetry, the homage of the county people, gave the following sketch of Bryant's early connection with that paper :—

## ADDRESS OF HENRY S. GERE.

An examination of the files of the *Gazette* from 1806 to 1815 shows four of Mr. Bryant's poems. The first one appears in the issue of March 13, 1807. It has this introduction, probably given by the editor: "A Poem composed by a lad twelve years old, to be exhibited at the close of the winter school, in presence of the master, the minister of the parish, and a number of private gentlemen."

This poem bears the date of Cummington, February 19, 1807, and has the signature of C. B.

In the Biographical Sketch of Mr. Bryant, published in 1880, it is stated that this poem was written in his tenth year, but as it bears the date of 1807, and was published in that year, it must have been written when he was in his thirteenth year or, as the caption says, "by a lad of twelve years."

In the issue of January 17, 1810, appears the poem entitled "The Genius of Columbia." It is dated Cummington, January 18, 1810, and the signature is W. C. B.

In the paper of July 15, 1812, appears "An Ode for the Fourth of July"—Tune, "Ye Gentlemen of England." The editor introduces it in these words: "Want of room last week obliged us to delay the publication of the following elegant and patriotic ode, from the pen of Mr. William C. Bryant, son of Dr. Bryant of Cummington."

In the paper of July 12, 1815, appears another ode by Mr. Bryant, with this introduction by the editor: "The following ode, the production of Mr. William C. Bryant, a young gentleman to whom we have been repeatedly indebted for his elegant and poetic effusions, was received at too late an hour to occupy the place it so well deserves in our festivals. We cannot, however, refrain from giving it to our readers." This ode consists of five stanzas, and was on the return of peace, the war between the United States and Great Britain having closed a short time previous.

There may have been other of Mr. Bryant's early poems published in the *Gazette* in those years, but they are not complete, and in some instances original poems were published without any signature or date, to indicate their authorship.

We stand to-day upon consecrated ground. In the language of President Lincoln on the battlefield of Gettysburg—"The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what he did here." He was the inspired poet of these hills. He roamed these fields, he traversed these forests, he climbed these rocks, he ascended and reascended these hills, until they became to him the dearest of friends. He drank from nature the essential spirit of poetry, an appreciation of its own wondrous beauty and completeness, and a deep reverence for the omnipotent power that created it. He found pleasure and companionship everywhere—in the fields, in the woods, by the streams, in the valleys, on the mountain tops. In the trees and the rocks, in the grasses and the flowers, in the growing crops and the ripened fruits, in the playfulness of youth, and the serenity of age, in the babbling brook and the starry heavens he found those sublime thoughts which illuminate his writings and make his name a sweet and enduring remembrance.

Did he find enjoyment in the seclusion of these hills and the solitude of these forests?

> "There is a pleasure in the pathless woods;
> There is a rapture on the lonely shore;
> There is society where none intrudes,
> By the deep pool, and music in the roar
> Of foaming waters."

He found them all, and more. He held communion with the visible forms of nature; aye, and with the invisible. What makes the genuine poet? Not accident nor chance, nor caprice, nor freak. It is rather the touch of inspiration.

> "In the still air the music lies unheard;
> In the rough marble beauty hides unseen;
> To make the music, and the beauty, needs
> The master's touch, the sculptor's chisel keen.

Great Master, touch us by thy skillful hand,
Let not the music that is in us die;
Great Sculptor, hew and polish us, nor let
Hidden and lost, thy form within us lie."

It is a pleasure to believe that in the working out of the great problem of human development God selects and prepares his agents to do their appointed work. He gave us Washington to carry to a successful issue the War of the Revolution, to establish a nation founded upon the freedom and equality of man. He gave us Lincoln to guide the ship of state through the stormy years of the Rebellion, with that marvelous wisdom which has been and ever will be the admiration of mankind. He gave us Grant to lead the Union armies with that matchless skill and success which have been the wonder of the world. So in his own good time, he gave us Bryant, to sweeten, and broaden, and ennoble, and uplift, the minds and hearts of the people of the nation He founded and saved. He lived to see the full measure of his fame as a poet, as a philanthropist, as a journalist, as a statesman, as a patriot, as a man, spread over all the land. He lived to see the full fruition of his labors as a coworker in the greatest philanthropic movement in the civilization of the age. He lived to pass "the bound of man's appointed years," and, in the fullness of time, like a shock of corn ripened unto the harvest.

"Life's blessings all enjoyed, life's labors done,
Serenely to his final rest has passed;
While the soft memory of his virtues, yet
Lingers like twilight hues, when the bright sun is set."

"And I am glad that he has lived thus long,
And glad that he has gone to his reward;
Nor can I deem that nature did him wrong
Softly to disengage the vital cord;
For, when his hand grew palsied, and his eye
Dark with the mists of age, it was his time to die."

The exercises closed with the singing of the following hymn to the tune "Uxbridge:"—

"Our father; to Thy love we owe
All that is fair and good below;
Life, and the health that makes life sweet
Are blessings from thy mercy seat.

"Oh, Giver of the quickening rain,
Oh, Ripener of the golden grain,
From Thee the cheerful day spring flows,
Thy balmy evening brings repose.

"Thy frosts arrest, Thy tempests chase
The plagues that waste our helpless race,
Thy softer breath, o'er land and deep
Wakes nature from her winter sleep.

"Yet deem we not that thus alone
Thy bounty and Thy love are shown,
For we have learned with higher praise
And holier names to speak Thy ways."

BRYANT.

L. of C.

# CHILDREN'S MEMORIAL EXERCISES.

PROGRAMME.

1. OPENING HYMN, "The Love of God is over all His Works."
   Read by Mrs. M. C. Stutson.
2. ADDRESS. . . . . . . . W. W. Orcutt.
3. MEMORIAL PAPER. . . . . . Miss Fanny L. Rogers.
4. COMPOSITION. . . . . . . Grace Shaw.
5. JUNE. . . . . . . . Clara Snow.
6. VALEDICTORY ADDRESS. . . . . . Will R. Lyman.
7. FOREST HYMN. . . . . . . Annie Stevens.
8. INNOCENT CHILD WITH THE SNOW-WHITE FLOWER. Alfred R. Packard.
9. MEMORIAL EXTRACTS.

Edith Streeter. Elsie Packard. Marcia Jenkins. Arthur Packard.
Fred Randall. George Whitmarsh. Harry McCoy.
Lena Shaw.

10. HYMN. . . . . . . . . *Whittier.*
11. THANATOPSIS. . . . . . . Lena Packard.
12. BRYANT'S ADDRESS TO THE SUNDAY SCHOOL AT WEST CUMMINGTON.
    Nellie Bryant.
13. THE HURRICANE. . . . . . . Ernest Sears.
14. ROBERT OF LINCOLN. . . . . . Flora Packard.
15. THE RIVULET. . . . . . . Herbert Streeter.
16. BATTLE HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC. . . . *Julia Ward Howe.*
17. JULIA WARD HOWE'S POEM, "The Flag," recited by Edith Streeter, in honor of the author, who is expected to be present.

We arrived at Cummington in time to take supper and to attend a children's concert at the village church. There was a local orchestra of four or five pieces, and a chorus, both of which also took part in the exercises next day; and there were recitations from Bryant's poems and compositions by the children, all under the management of a tireless young lady resident. Looking at the children as they were grouped in the front pews, I was struck by the preponderance of pure New England types, such a collection of which I had not seen in twenty years, or before familar districts in New England were involved by foreign immigration. So I was not surprised next day to learn from Mr. Tower's admirable address that "the town is still one of pure New England stock, and out of two hundred voters, only three are not of American birth. . . . It is still a farming community, as it was a hundred years ago, and the farmers win a scanty living from rebellious soil." To me this children's concert, with its manifestation of the pure, native stock, was the most interesting feature of the Bryant Centenary.

ARTHUR STEDMAN, in "*The Dial.*"

## BRYANT MEMORIAL COMMITTEE.

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